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This page: (top left) Canoeing on the Farmington River, photo by Adam Coppola; (top right) the Nautilus receives a hero's welcome in New York City, photo courtesy of the U.S. Navy; (above) Hoodoo Brown BBQ's brisket, photo by Paul Almira.

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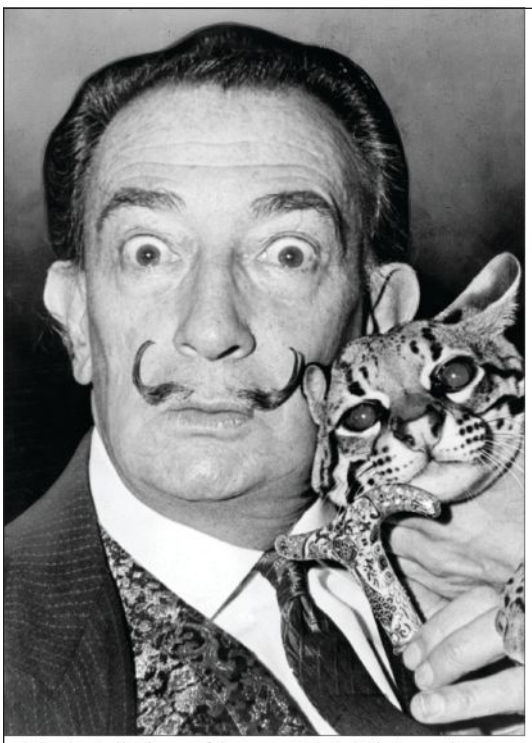

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editor's note

The Barbecue Quest

Christmas Eve 2014. I was in the Dallas area visiting family, one stop of many along the cross-country drive I wrote about in my first editor's note on this page.

One of the journey's requirements was to sample as much of the best local fare as I could fit in my stomach. And in Texas, barbecue is king.

I'd already had a taste of authentic Southern barbecue — at The Smokin' Pig in Pendleton, South Carolina, just down the road from Clemson University in the northwestern corner of the state — and it only made me crave more of it.

As I pulled into the parking lot of Hutchins BBQ in McKinney, Texas, expectations were high. It was before noon, but the lot was nearly to capacity with pickup trucks and SUVs — a good sign.

Inside was a rustic space just about bursting at the seams with people. Forty-five minutes later, I had a full tray.

Not wanting to eat too heavy with an enormous meal coming later in the day, my wife and I split an order of St. Louis-style ribs — larger and meatier than the baby back variety. Only a few bites in, it became clear why *Texas Monthly* magazine named Hutchins one of the "50 Best BBQ Joints in the World," ("the World" being Texas, but still). My only regret: forgoing the beef brisket, the Cadillac of Texas meats.

Once back home in Connecticut and with a longing for more Southern-inspired barbecue, what was I to do? Surely I couldn't justify driving or flying down South whenever overcome with a craving. Fortunately I would soon discover a growing constellation of great barbecue joints right here in the Nutmeg State.

So perhaps it's no coincidence I, along with writers Erik Ofgang and Kate Hartman, set out to find the best barbecue joints in Connecticut. From Groton to Ridgefield, we did the work for you. Check out our spread on page 74.

And lest we forget, June 19 is Father's Day. We all know dads are tough to shop for, so why not give him the gift of an experience? I'm willing to bet most dads would relish the chance to indulge at one of our recommended barbecue spots. The same can be said for any of the places in our "beefed-up" Connecticut Table (page 71) — Cure in Unionville (bacon is the highlight, but smoke is the real, behind-the-scenes star), Arethusa Farm Dairy (Connecticut-made dairy delights now in a New Haven location) and Greer's and Beers (legendary Bristol fried chicken shack now has a full-fledged restaurant in Southington).

Or how about a trip back into history? The submarine base in Groton — which marks 100 years this month — is overflowing with it. You can step aboard the *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear-powered sub, which carried out a top-secret, Cold War mission that would solidify U.S. technological supremacy more than a decade before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon (page 59).

Speaking of history, in researching a little-known flight in Connecticut in the 19th century, we may have discovered another state aviator who can claim a historical first; the other, of course, being Gustave Whitehead, who many say beat out the Wright brothers. Brush up on The Connecticut Files on page 104.

Looking for something a bit more active to do with dad, or the whole family? Dive into our "Soak Up the Fun" feature (page 47), in which we explore the many water-themed places and activities to enjoy this summer, including the Sound, lakes, rivers, nautical heritage, water parks and, my personal favorite, waterfalls.

If you're a parent, you'll want to read "Solving Autism's Puzzle" (page 39), which tells of a UConn professor's efforts to give hope and guidance to families dealing with the disorder.

And are you looking for some hope of improvement at the much-maligned Department of Motor Vehicles? Well, it has a new leader who's already made sweeping changes. Still, there's a tough road ahead (page 8).

Albert Yuravich
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Correction: The story "Oxy-Connecticut" (May 2016) incorrectly referred to The Governor's Prevention Partnership as the State's Prevention Partnership.

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DMV PHOTOS BY MICHAEL CATAREVAS

Above, people wait inside the Norwalk office of the state Department of Motor Vehicles. Opposite page, the exterior of the Norwalk DMV office.

Driven to Tears

WITH ITS COMPUTER SYSTEM UPGRADE A DOWNER, FORCING CUSTOMERS TO CONTINUALLY PLAY THE WAITING GAME, CONNECTICUT'S DMV IS SEEMINGLY IN FREEFALL. BUT WITH NEW LEADERSHIP COMES HOPE — AGAIN.

BY MICHAEL CATAREVAS

Early Saturday mornings outside the Norwalk Department of Motor Vehicles often resemble a hot 1980s disco, with dozens and dozens of people lined up, anxious to enter. The difference is, instead of partying once inside, the poor saps just face more waiting, often hours, to accomplish such simple tasks as registering vehicles or canceling license plates.

Michael Bzdyra

"I always figure going to the DMV takes three or four hours," says Stamford's Bruno Miraballes as he exited the facility at 9:15 a.m. "I got here at 7:50 and was in line back there to the trees. I'm not done, I'm just taking a break."

Public transportation anyone?

The DMV was never known for efficiency, but ironically it was a $25 million computer "upgrade" in 2015 that brought intense scrutiny to the department when the software failed to operate as planned, actually causing more problems and lengthening wait times.

The state had contracted with 3M, a St. Paul, Minnesota-based company, for a multi-phase computer overhaul, but terminated the deal in April with one phase remaining — modernizing the licensing system — when the myriad problems arose with the second phase, upgrading vehicle registrations.

Then-DMV Commissioner Andres Ayala Jr. resigned in January 2016 over the calamitous chain of events, after just a year in the $160,000-per-year position.

New DMV Commissioner Michael Bzdyra, who was appointed in March 2016 by Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, took action when it became clear the problems were widespread, telling 3M they would not continue on.

"We plan to go forward with Phase 3, and we're still exploring options for how to do it," says Bzdyra. "Phase 3 involves modernizing the licensing system. We are holding 3M accountable for fixing bugs in Phase 2, the registration modernizing."

What particularly galls Sen. Toni Boucher (R-26), a ranking member of the state Senate's Transportation Committee, is that with a little forethought the computer imbroglio might have been avoided, in her opinion, because in 2012-13 the Kansas DMV had a similar arrangement with 3M and experienced the same computer issues Connecticut's DMV now faces.

"It is inconceivable that the Connecticut DMV did not perform due diligence in vetting this vendor that oversaw a massive failure in overhauling the Kansas DMV,"

Boucher says. "A review of the previous projects this company had performed should have been done prior to selection and implementation of their program, not after they may have caused so many problems for Connecticut residents.

"Seeing how many issues the State of Kansas faced in contracting with this firm, what had changed that our DMV felt it prudent to enter into a contract with them?"

DMV spokesman William Seymour took exception to Boucher's comments.

"The DMV is not a signatory to the contract for the modernization," he told *Connecticut Magazine* via email. "The contract for this system was signed in 2009 by former state Department of Information Technology Commissioner Diane Wallace during her appointment under the administration of former Gov. M. Jodi Rell. The current administration entered office bound by the contract and all of its terms."

Seymour also disputes Boucher's claims that the DMV did not look into the issues Kansas faced with 3M.

"The DMV was aware of the difficulties in Kansas and some other states," he says. "There was no way to know if problems there would replicate in Connecticut because there were many unique features that are inherent in how Connecticut registrations are administered. Connecticut was well into its project when the Kansas problems fully presented themselves. Because there was no hard evidence that Connecticut would face the same difficulties, it was decided to keep going forward.

> **"Everyone knows the DMV is a form of purgatory."**
>
> *— Greg Porretta of Westport*

"This decision was supported by results from the first phase of the project, a successful launch of various smaller business applications."

CHALLENGES GOING FORWARD

Bzdyra has a daunting task — turn things around as quickly as possible. The laundry list of what needs to be cleaned up includes:

- Multi-hour wait times for customers.
- A three-month backlog to take a driver's license test.
- Cities and towns not collecting taxes because vehicles are listed in wrong municipalities.
- Vehicles becoming unregistered due to tax-communication errors.

"Our goal is to make the DMV more customer-centric," he says. "We have been on a listening tour, myself and Deputy Commissioner Judeen Wrinn, going to branches, looking at operations, finding out how customers and employees feel about those operations. We're gathering facts and listening to what everyone has to say."

That research led to action on May 2, when Bzdyra announced agency-wide organizational changes he said were designed not just to overcome the technology problems but to address the woeful customer-service issues. He emphasized that the decisions were made without additional personnel or increases in DMV's budget.

The new initiatives include:

- Appointing one former DMV division chief, Jim Rio, to the newly established position of chief operating officer, tasked with coordinating the activities of several major divisions to ensure better customer service.
- Naming another former division chief, Ken Nappi, to oversee consolidating all incoming customer phone calls (2,000 daily) statewide into a single service operation.
- Strengthening the discipline, processes and oversight of projects that have significant impacts on customers, partners and the DMV, including the registration-system-modernization project launched last August.

• Improving training that enhances delivery of customer services and collecting statistical and other management reporting data across agency business lines.

"We're going to do what it takes to turn it around," says Bzdyra. "It's time for a fresh look at changing old ways of doing things at the DMV."

Bzdyra, 51, of Wallingford, has been with the DMV since 2011. He was deputy commissioner before taking the top spot. Prior to that he spent 13 years with the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, as a government relations liaison and senior analyst.

Wrinn, 57, of Middletown, named deputy commissioner when Bzdyra was appointed commissioner, most recently worked for Voya Financial as chief operations officer.

HURRY UP AND WAIT

A 2015 study by DMV.com showed Connecticut wait times were the fifth worst in the U.S., behind only West Virginia, Nevada, Louisiana and California. The average wait times for the frustrating five was over an hour. Kentucky, by the way, was No. 1, with a 10-minute wait.

Bzdyra says some improvement has been made since the new software was first introduced last August.

"The average wait time statewide immediately after the launch was 2 hours and 41 minutes," he says. "That measurement does not include time spent in the information line [waiting to get a number]. For the full month of March [2016], the average wait time was 1 hour and 8 minutes. That is a nearly 60 percent reduction. Nonetheless, we are focused on finding a solution to reduce wait times even further."

While DMV customers can't avoid the lines, they can find out how long the wait will be by going to ct.gov/dmv and clicking "Check Wait Times." Information for all branches includes service type, wait times and customers in queue. It updates every five minutes. The website also offers registration renewals and cancellations, printing of vehicle registration, ordering of special plates and checking compliance issues.

Bzdyra noted that if more people used the website, lines at DMVs would shrink.

"Wait times are increased by people going to the DMV who do not need to be there," he says. "About 34 percent of visitors to a DMV branch could have conducted their business online. People think, 'I need to go to the DMV,' as opposed to going online to the DMV. That's a cultural change we are working on. We will have focus groups following surveys we're doing to discuss ways to promote more use of our online services."

DEALERSHIP ISSUES

Connecticut residents may get frustrated with the DMV, but at least they usually only have to go once every few years. For car dealerships, it's a different story.

Leo E. Karl III is president of New Canaan's Karl Chevrolet. His discontent with the DMV runs deep.

"We as new-vehicle dealers — and there are about 275 of us in the state — have to deal with the DMV virtually every day," he says. "We have a lot of issues, the software platform being just one of them. The system is broken."

A major point of contention for Karl is issuing registrations.

"In the past, if a customer owed property tax on another vehicle, they would be issued a temporary registration when they bought a new car," he says. "After they paid the owed tax, Wethersfield sent them full registration. With the new software, we can't issue even a temporary registration to customers who owe back property taxes on vehicles. So we virtually become the tax collector to make the sale."

Even more discouraging for Karl is feeling the new computer system was flawed from the start.

"We as dealers had no look at it until two weeks before it went live," he explains. "The moment we saw it, red flags went off and questions were asked. What about this, what about this, what about this? They did not bring in focus groups of people who were going to be using it. I think it's a generic program package that other states use, but Connecticut is one of the few states that has the vehicle property tax, so you have an issue of tracking the tax town on the registration document.

"The system was supposed to make it easier to do business, but has had the opposite effect. It's become more tedious."

OUTSOURCING OPTIONS

There has been talk of the DMV outsourcing more of its services, like it did by making it possible to renew a driver's license at AAA. In February, Malloy introduced legislation that would allow Bzdyra to hire a company that offers vehicle registration and other services.

"Long wait times experienced by customers at the DMV are simply unacceptable, and that's why we're outlining common-sense proposals to lower them," Malloy said at the time.

If such action came to pass, union jobs in Connecticut could be eliminated.

That scenario doesn't sit well with Lori J. Pelletier, president of the Connecticut AFL-CIO, who was blunt in her criticism of Malloy's proposal.

"The Connecticut DMV is already an outsourcing disaster," she says. "Over the past year, the public has witnessed what happens when you outsource work that can be done by current state workers. The software upgrade, done by a private for-profit company, has caused increased wait times and listed vehicles in the wrong municipalities. It's obvious that outsourcing IT work has been a terrible failure. And for reasons that defy logic, we have bills that would continue to outsource and privatize the DMV. Why continue to waste taxpayer dollars on needless privatization schemes when state workers can do it right the first time and for less money?"

Bzdyra didn't have a firm opinion either way when asked about outsourcing. "What matters most is that whatever we're going to be doing focuses on customers to make it easy, convenient and streamlined for them."

A COMMISSIONER'S CREDIBILITY

With all that he's facing going forward, Bzdyra has also had to deal with an issue from his past. Shortly before becoming commissioner he admitted to not having an MBA from UConn, although it was on his résumé. He'd taken many courses toward the degree, but had not earned it.

"I'm researching it with the university," he says. "Right now I'm focusing on trying to get things right at the DMV. In due time, after we get through some of this, I'll follow up with that. Gov. Malloy has been supportive of me. He knows I made a mistake. And for myself I want to go back and finish things up at UConn."

Boucher is sympathetic — to a point.

"At least he admitted it before someone dug it up," she says. "We have to remember the legislature can confirm, but it is the governor who is the boss. He hires and fires. If it doesn't work out, I'll hold their feet to the fire."

As Bzdyra envisions future improvements in all areas, the reality of today's DMV experience is similar for almost all who go there.

Greg Porretta of Westport was frustrated but calm before getting back in his car after a fruitless Norwalk DMV visit the same Saturday as Miraballes.

"They were nice enough in there, but the reality is once you're in line, you're going to be waiting a long time," he says. "And everybody knows that when they come to the DMV. I was in a queue with 30 people ahead of me. In the last 45 minutes, three people were processed. I have to be somewhere in two hours, so I'm not going to make it. I gotta come back. This is normal. Everyone knows the DMV is a form of purgatory."

Game-changer

DERBY COMPANY AIMS TO REDUCE HEAD INJURIES WITH NEW FACEMASK

BY ALBERT YURAVICH

Every umpire and catcher — amateur or professional — can tell stories of getting popped with speeding baseballs to the facemask.

Count Jason Klein among them. The Orange native spent 10 years umpiring in the minor leagues, taking many shots to the mask. It was during that time that he started to take a hard look at the equipment, particularly the mask. "I just thought that a piece of equipment that hadn't been changed in, forever, needed to be updated," Klein says.

Jason Klein

Then he was struck, not by a baseball, but by an idea — what if he could figure out a way to build a shock absorber into the mask to lessen the impact? In an era of growing concern over concussions, it's a critical question.

After ending his umpiring career in 2009, Klein founded Derby-based Force3 Pro Gear, at first focusing on producing umpire equipment, including chest protectors and shin guards. But several years ago he decided it was time to get going on his idea for improving the facemask.

After developing and testing about 100 different designs, the spring-loaded Force3 Defender mask was born. Springs along both sides of the forehead and the chin reduce the force of impacts by at least half, according to the company.

SKIP STOWERS

Atlanta Braves catcher Tyler Flowers wearing the Force3 Defender mask during a spring training game.

"We tested it not only in the factory but in three different independent testing labs here in the U.S.," Klein says. "Two of them wouldn't even certify the results because they had never seen results that had scored that low."

The test results also made an impression on major league catcher Tyler Flowers. "Pretty much every mask out there throughout my career is the same thing," says Flowers, who joined the Atlanta Braves this past offseason after playing for the Chicago White Sox since 2009. "I was very intrigued to see a suspension system on a mask."

While he's never been diagnosed with a concussion, Flowers has taken some "great shots" in his baseball career. "If you get a few [concussions] in a row, your career could be over," he says.

After being introduced to Klein and the Force3 Defender by his agents, Flowers became the first catcher to wear the mask in MLB games this spring. "You definitely notice a difference [wearing the mask]," says Flowers, who took a small, undisclosed stake in the company. "I've taken enough shots to wake you up and haven't really felt them."

Flowers' fellow catchers around the majors and minors have also taken notice. While in Florida for spring training with the Braves, Klein was approached by Ryan Lavarnway, a Yale product who plays with the Braves' Triple-A affiliate. The former Boston Red Sox player tried the mask and was instantly sold. "My parents paid a lot of money for my education; I need to protect my head," he told Klein.

Other minor league catchers, as well as umpires, are wearing the mask. Klein has had conversations with several major league teams, including some that have purchased the Defender. Major league catchers have endorsement deals with other sports equipment companies, however, that require them to wear their gear, Flowers says. It's the same with major league umpires. But both Klein and Flowers see more major leaguers adopting the Force3 mask come next season when contracts expire.

The Defender, which is available in both the traditional and hockey-mask styles, ranges in price from $149.95 to $179.95 and can be purchased at force3progear.com. It's now the official catcher's mask of the Eastern College Athletic Conference, which has Division III baseball schools.

COURTESY OF FORCE3 PRO GEAR

The Force3 Defender facemask.

"Sales are through the roof," says Klein. "Every projection we've made to have masks on hand were totally blown away."

Flowers sees the Defender, the hockey style of which is available in youth sizes, making an impact on younger players, as well. "If we didn't start to do something, parents might not be OK with their kids being catchers."

While the company is pursuing making masks for other sports that involve facial impacts, including lacrosse, don't expect football to be one of them. "Football is more helmet-to-helmet, or head-to-head," Klein says. "Football players are also running around while impacting each other. Our mask can certainly help if the impact is made face-to-face, but it would be difficult if the helmet was hit where our technology isn't."

For baseball and other sports, Klein has high hopes. "Nothing is guaranteed, but we've put so much time and testing into these masks to really perform at a level where it can minimize those damaging impacts," says Klein. The goal is that "getting hit in the head will become a non-event."

Homeless to Harvard

ON THE STREETS AND WITHOUT PARENTS, LIZ MURRAY 'WAS GOING TO KEEP GOING'

On her own at 15 when her mother died of AIDS and her father moved into a homeless shelter, Liz Murray lived in poverty. But she took control of her life, eventually finishing high school, graduating from Harvard University, writing a best-selling book on her journey and becoming the subject of a Lifetime television movie. Now a motivational speaker, the successful 35-year-old married mother will tell her story at the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut Women's Leadership Council's fifth annual Power of the Purse luncheon and auction on June 7 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

Where do you think you got your drive and your fortitude as a young woman, and were there ever moments when you were tempted to just give up?

I think growing up we sometimes look at what we call adversity in a skewed way. We think automatically that if a child is poor without enough to eat, without resources or with adversity we need to save that child from a bad experience. I lived that and it forced me to become gritty. I was going to keep going. Emotions go in cycles and I had my days where it felt like the whole world was on my shoulders. I thought I was broken and defective, but for the grace of God I always arrived back at this place where it was not acceptable to me to give in. My parents may have been drug addicted, but they were loving people and we had a great relationship to the extent we could. My mother was known for being very determined, relentless when she wanted something, even with the drugs. And my father told me there were ways to do things even if you thought you couldn't.

What do you think people can learn from hardship, especially in a culture that seems to focus on "having" versus "wanting" or "needing?"

I wonder when did we become so afraid of not having a ton of objects or money? We have become identified with what we own. And then you live in all this fear of losing. The truth is when you have to be strong you will be; you are so much stronger than you think you are. You don't grow when something is easy. Being buried under adversity is difficult, but you can grow.

You wrote the best-selling book *Homeless to Harvard* and then there was the well-received Lifetime movie on your life. Why do you think both resonated so much with people?

Everybody, regardless of where you come from or [what you] have, at one point or another wants to give up. Whether it's a huge moment or many little ones, which is usually the way it happens, there is this choice. I didn't know everyone felt that way. This was not a story about a homeless issue, but rather "how do I handle adversity?" I hope my book resonates with a wide array of people and they can relate to knowing they have a powerful something inside of them. We can all picture what is possible and in our wildest dreams we fight to have it.

What was your lowest point in life? What was your highest?

I hit lows throughout my life. I guess right around the time I lost my mother. What I had been doing up until then was hanging around with friends, pushing life away and not dealing with it. When she passed away, I was not there the way I wanted to be. When I lost her it was such a low. I had that feeling of a missed opportunity. The highest point was having my children.

If you could go back and know then what you know now, what advice would you give your 15-year-old self?

I could have given advice, but I'm not sure at 15 I would have heard it. I think I would have told myself, "You are enough." I think I lived with this feeling that I was so outside of society and the world. That I didn't belong. I think I would tell myself you have something to contribute, just like everyone else.

Now you are a mom. In your opinion, what is the most significant gift a parent can give to a child?

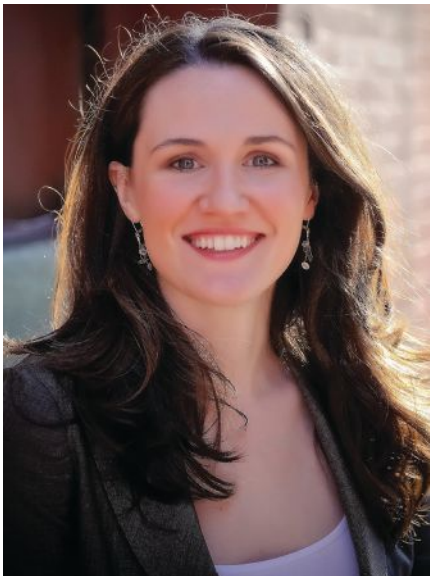
Unconditional love, hands down. To be there for them no matter what and facilitate experiences for that young person to grow up and become who they are. Let them make their own mistakes. At the core of it is, "I will never leave you."

If you could magically have a moment with your parents, what do you think you would say to each other? Do you have any anger toward them? Have you forgiven them?

They'd be so proud, both of them would be. On another level I think my mom would rush over and pick up the grandchildren. I look at my children and see my parents' faces on them. I have no anger toward them for their addiction. I knew it was a disease. I didn't look at it as something being done to me but something happening to all of us.

To others who are struggling out there and are being bullied or feel lost or abandoned with no hope, what is your advice?

Human beings have a tendency to judge one another. It's not just people being judged, it's also a case of you missing out on an incredible person by making a snap judgment and not looking more closely. As a teenager it is tricky because there is a lot of stuff out of your control. You can't control your parents or your surroundings. You need to focus on what you can control and use that toward something better like grades, character being solid and kind, and knowing you are worthy.



Liz Murray

You are the featured speaker at this year's *Power of the Purse* luncheon. In the figurative sense, what do you think a purse and its power represent for women, and perhaps anyone?

I think it represents the idea of independence. Women are in a funny place right now. There was a time back when you had to stay home and then for a while you had to have a career and now we are in a place where both are accepted. Women are tasked with doing both and are pulled in many directions. I think it's important for women to be directed from within, asking themselves "what do I want to create my life."

As you prepare to speak at one of Hartford's most popular and well-attended events, what will your message be?

I think there is some universal stuff, a message of forgiveness, women's independence, and those go hand in hand. What is the life you are meant to live? Write a book, run a marathon or reconnect with your loved ones; this is the time to do it and live that life. The other piece is we underestimate how powerful we are when it comes to helping other people. I wouldn't be talking to you if people hadn't helped me. My message is don't die with your dreams still inside of you. You are creative and unique and will be missed in a world without you. Find the path you are supposed to be on.

Again, because this a *Power of the Purse*, with tongue in cheek I just have to ask, what purse of yours is a favorite?

I carry a bookbag instead of a purse. I bought it from a Sundance catalogue.

What is something most people don't know about you?

I'm a homebody. I like to be in PJs at home. I know everyone gets excited about having a bucket list and traveling all over, but I am never happier than I am at home with my kids playing Legos.

Tickets for the luncheon and auction, which includes hundreds of designer purses, start at $125. For more information, go to unitedwayinc.org.

MARYELLEN FILLO

stepping out

1. The United Way's sixth annual **Best Of Awards** recognized organizations and individuals across central and northeastern Connecticut for outstanding effort and creativity at their workplaces in leading the 2015 United Way Campaign, which raised $22 million for children and families in the community. From left are Susan Lane of Hoffman Auto, Donna Collins of the Hartford Business Journal and Bonnie Malley of The Phoenix Companies. *(photo by Alex Syphers)*

2. *Savor*, a weekend wine and food event, was held recently at the Connecticut Convention Center. Among the celebrity chefs from Hartford featured at the **Savor In Style Charity Gala** benefiting the Robert Irvine Foundation were, from left, Billy Carbone of DISH, Vinnie Carbone of Carbone's and Jamie McDonald of Bear's Smokehouse. *(photo by MaryEllen Fillo)*

3. More than 600 men and women turned out for the YWCA Hartford Region's annual **In the Company of Women luncheon** featuring Grammy winner Angelique Kidjo at the Connecticut Convention Center. Pictured at a VIP reception for the entertainer and activist are, from left, luncheon co-Chairwoman Lisa Chirchella, Kidjo and YWCA Executive Director Deborah Ullman. Not pictured is luncheon co-Chairwoman Dantaya Williams. *(photo by MaryEllen Fillo)*

4. Silver Hill Hospital's president, Dr. Sigurd Ackerman, joined actor Sam Waterston, host of the PBS documentary series ***Visionaries***, for the filming of the opening and closing remarks for an upcoming episode featuring Silver Hill Hospital. The episode will air later this year. The series will take viewers for a rare look inside the bucolic hospital campus. *(photo by Heather Porter)*

5. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Connecticut/Westchester Hudson Valley Chapter launched the 2016 **Man & Woman of the Year Campaign** at the Hyatt Regency in Old Greenwich. The event included the announcement of seven Man & Woman of the Year candidates, the local Boy and Girl of the Year and a presentation on the LLS mission. The chapter is set to announce its Man & Woman of the Year winners on June 11. From left: Ronnie Ram, 2016 MWOY co-chair and president at Inspira Media; Erika Dimson, 2016 MWOY co-chair and 2015 Woman of the Year; Melissa Lonquich, NYC teacher; Rawn Williams, managing director, Jeffries; Victoria Landau, philanthropist; Todd Zavorskas, Team Zombie leader; Mike Fisher, senior managing director, RIN Capital Group; Jeffrey St. Gelais, teacher; Dennis Chillemi, executive director, LLS. Front and center: Savanna DiFatta, 2016 Girl of the Year, of New Rochelle, N.Y. *(photo by Marilyn Roos Photography)*

Send your photos to **steppingout@connecticutmag.com**.

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Want a Daycation?

IF YOU'RE IN THE MOOD FOR A ONE-DAY GETAWAY, THIS TRAVELER HAS SOME IDEAS TO SHARE

Nina Lesiga, who had driven up from her home in Stratford, looked around the meeting room at the New Haven Free Public Library on a recent Saturday afternoon and told us, "My name is Nina and I am a traveler. One of my passions is daycations."

Indeed, the title of her talk was "The Art of Daycations." You might not have realized this is an "art," but Lesiga approaches it like a dedicated artist.

CATHERINE AVALONE

Travel coach, motivational speaker and storyteller Nina Lesiga gives a talk on "the art of daycations" at the New Haven Public Library.

She defined "daycation" for us in simple terms: "It's a day's outing without needing to stay overnight." She noted there are many opportunities for us to do fun things and get back home by nightfall in snug Connecticut.

Lesiga told us: "What I ask of you today is this: Be here. Be in the moment. Be open to new ideas. Follow your own compass."

Originally a New Yorker, Lesiga moved to Stratford 12 years ago. "It was my dream to live by the shore. You can do that affordably in Stratford."

She has gone on some of her favorite daycations right in her adopted hometown. Although she strongly advises daycationers to do some research and planning before journeying out, she just walked along the Stratford beaches without any particular plan. "And I found a message in a bottle! It turned out to be from a boy who had put it in the water the day before. But I called him and then I put my own message in a bottle."

Lesiga raved about something else in Stratford that was new to my ears: "Blues on the Beach," an outdoor music festival held annually on Short Beach; this year it will happen July 23 from 2 to 9 p.m. "It's about good music, enjoying the company of new and old friends and summertime fun. You'll see the beach and surrounding areas speckled with decorated tents, deck furniture and even roasting pigs. This family-friendly event drew 20,000 people last year."

Lesiga also told us about the "Little Poland" neighborhood of New Britain, which boasts a large Polish population. If you walk down Broad Street, you will see more than 70 Polish shops, including restaurants, bakeries and butchers. "The last time I stopped by for lunch, I bit into a freshly made pierogi and it was a little bit of heaven." (On the last Sunday of every April, you can experience "The Little Poland Festival.")

Because she has an open mind and often drives around Connecticut to see what she can find, Lesiga makes rewarding discoveries. One of her favorites is Sankow's Beaver Brook Farm in Lyme. "I saw a sign and a red barn-like structure and pulled right in. It was a sheep and cow dairy farm!"

After she bought some "amazing" artisan cheese (and learned Connecticut actually has a cheese trail), a farm staffer encouraged her to "visit the new babies and the wool shop." She recalled, "I opened the door to where I was enthusiastically greeted by a chorus of more than 50 baby lambs. I found myself laughing out loud and encouraged them to do it again and they obliged!" (Sankow's is at 139 Beaver Brook Road, Lyme. Call 1-800-501-WOOL or go to buyctgrown.com/sankows-beaver-brook-farm.)

Lesiga recommends public libraries as a source of fun events. "You'd be amazed at the breadth and depth of the activities. I saw a listing at the Milford Public Library for raising chickens in your backyard."

At the Westport Public Library, Lesiga discovered "the Westport Ukulele Meetup," which happens once every month on a Thursday night. Lesiga said the sessions are led by a musician, but the players who join don't have to be experienced. "It's rejuvenating to play a ukulele for an hour and thrilling to see the players come for the first time, fumble and then create music with confidence at the end of the hour. And it's free. If you don't own a ukulele, you can sign one out like a library book." (The library is at 20 Jesup Road in Westport, 203-291-4800, westportlibrary.org. You have to register for this event.)

Lesiga favors daycations that are offbeat and inexpensive. Often she goes to Trumbull to watch women's roller derby games. She recalled seeing a doubleheader for $11.34. "That's entertainment!" (ctrollerderby.com).

Lesiga's favorite sources for daycation leads include the Connecticut tourism site (ctvisit.com), "CT Now" (ctnow.com), our own *Connecticut Magazine* (connecticutmag.com) and infonewhaven.com.

And don't forget your local newspaper. "That's how I found out about an Aztec Two-Step concert 'under the stars' at the Discovery Museum and Planetarium in Bridgeport."

While Lesiga clearly enjoys discovering places most of us have never heard about, one of her tips is "include sure bets." And so she urges people not to forget to visit the Florence Griswold Museum, the great Impressionist art site. (It's at 96 Lyme St., Old Lyme, 860-434-5542, florencegriswoldmuseum.org.)

Lesiga has time to do all this traveling and to give lectures on her recommendations because she retired from a corporate job in product research and development. "Travel brings me joy and a better understanding of the world and myself. My art of travel is going outside of my comfort zone most of the time to fully engage with people and my surroundings. It's where I discover magic, happiness and have quality experiences."

And of course she has a website: gottatravelsolo.com.

Randall Beach is the longtime columnist for the New Haven Register, where his column appears Fridays and Sundays.

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community

BY KATE HARTMAN

PHOTOS BY STEFANIE ARCANGELO, AMERICAN RED CROSS

Left: Connecticut volunteers Jan and Bob Bertolo help a boy choose a snack from a Red Cross mobile response vehicle during a deployment in Southeast Texas in March. **Right:** Red Crosser Jocelyn Hillard reviews a home fire-escape plan with Evelyn Chudzik of New Britain. The Red Cross installed free smoke alarms in Chudzik's home as part of their Home Fire Preparedness Campaign.

THE ORGANIZATION:
The Connecticut Red Cross

THE STORY: One of the most recognizable brand names in the world, the American Red Cross is well known by most. The name elicits images of community blood drives and volunteers rushing into the wreckage of a natural disaster to provide aid.

The national branch responds to about 70,000 disasters in the U.S. every year, providing shelter, food and health services. The organization also collects blood from nearly 4 million people annually, providing more than 40 percent of the country's blood supply.

But the organization does much more than that, and right here at home the Connecticut Red Cross is helping local families on a daily basis.

The organization's mission, both locally and nationally, is to "prevent and alleviate human suffering," says Chief Communications Officer Stefanie Arcangelo. It does this through five key services areas — blood collection, disaster relief, health and safety services like CPR training and swimming lessons, international services and support for America's military families.

The Red Cross' work is made possible by an enormous group of dedicated volunteers. Nationally, the organization runs on 90 percent volunteers. In Connecticut, the organization employs 29 paid employees and works with more than 3,000 volunteers across all departments.

"I can't begin to imagine the difficulty of living through the traumatic experience of being displaced from your home and losing all of your life's possessions or worse," says Red Cross volunteer Larry Berman of West Hartford. "I can't put into words the feeling of being able to provide immediate assistance to those families and helping them in even the smallest way in coping with the immediate crisis and the most difficult challenge of starting their recoveries. I have seen the very best of humanity in the toughest of times, and beyond the material and financial assistance the Red Cross provides, you can't overstate the value on being a good listener or providing a hug."

One of the local organization's largest current initiatives is a Fire Preparedness Campaign instituted in 2014 with the goal of reducing the number of injuries and deaths from home fires by about 25 percent over the course of five years. According to Arcangelo, home fires are the most common type of disaster.

"On average the Connecticut Red Cross responds to two home fires per day. We responded to over 800 disasters in Connecticut alone last year," says Arcangelo. "Every eight minutes someone at the Red Cross is responding to a disaster nationally."

Interested families can make an appointment for volunteers to examine their home's smoke alarms, install new ones, provide fire-safety education and craft a fire-escape plan.

"If you have a home fire, most experts agree you have two minutes to get out of the home safely," says Arcangelo. "Working fire alarms increase survival by 50 percent."

Between July 1, 2015, and March 31, 2016, the local chapter has installed 5,373 smoke alarms in Connecticut homes.

The Connecticut Red Cross is entirely supported by the generosity of public donations. On June 11 it will host its largest fundraiser of the year, the 11th annual Red, White + You Ball at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford, from 6 p.m. to midnight.

This black-tie event includes a dinner and silent auction. The evening will be filled with inspirational stories, including that of Colleen Kelly Alexander, who will be given the Community Impact Award.

Alexander is a blood donor turned blood recipient. In 2011 she was run over by a freight truck while out riding her bicycle. She was in a coma for five weeks and needed 78 units of blood to survive. "She credits blood donors with saving her life," says Arcangelo.

Alexander is a spokesperson for the Red Cross, a triathlete and a motivational speaker. Her story is a perfect example of the importance of blood donation.

"Our blood collection goes on seven days a week. On average we need to collect 400 to 450 units every day to meet hospital patient needs [in Connecticut]," says Arcangelo. "If people are willing and able to donate, it's important that they do."

The Connecticut Red Cross is always looking for volunteers. Those who are interested can reach out through the organization's website. Tickets for the Red, White + You Ball are also available at redcross.org/redcrossball.

redcross.org/local/connecticut

If you have an organization with an event that you'd like us to consider for the Community page, please send the details to khartman@connecticutmag.com.

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THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

The Flutter Zone at the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk (open through Labor Day) gives visitors a one-of-a-kind experience with some of the world's most beautiful butterflies. Varieties from Asia and South America float around the outdoor exhibit, landing on visitors as they explore the space. This June, visitors can convene with these flying friends while they sip wine and enjoy breakfast at two great events.

On June 15, taste a variety of wines from around the world at Flutter & Flights, a fun evening fundraiser that will run from 6 to 8 p.m. The event is open to anyone 21 and older and will include samplings from local restaurants. Tickets are $30 for aquarium members and $35 for the public.

Who doesn't love brunch? Even the butterflies do, and a select group of visitors will get a chance to enjoy a light breakfast and feed the exotic tropical butterflies at Breakfast with the Butterflies on June 26. Unfortunately, this is a very limited event with only 20 people admitted, so get your tickets early! All ages are welcome, but the event is ideal for families with children ages 3-6. Tickets are $40 for adults and $20 for children ages 3-12 ($35/$18 for aquarium members).

FLUTTER & FLIGHTS AND BREAKFAST WITH THE BUTTERFLIES
JUNE 15 & 26 | MARITIME AQUARIUM AT NORWALK
203-852-0700, maritimeaquarium.org

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MARITIME AQUARIUM

HIGH-HEELED FUN

Broadway's high-heeled hit is coming to the Shubert Theatre June 8-12. **Kinky Boots**, which is based on true events, takes you from a gentlemen's shoe factory in Northampton, England, to the glamorous catwalks of Milan with plenty of high-energy musical numbers along the way. With songs by Grammy- and Tony-winning singer Cyndi Lauper, the play tells the story of Charlie Price, who is struggling to live up to his father's expectations while working in the family business. When the factory is in trouble, help arrives in the unlikely form of Lola, a fabulous performer in need of new stilettos. *shubert.com*

OPENING CULTURAL DOORS

Our state will open the doors to some of its best tourist attractions on June 11 as part of **Connecticut Open House Day**. This annual event is an opportunity for residents to discover, or rediscover, some of the best arts, entertainment and historical gems, including the Barnum Museum, Goodspeed Opera House, Guilford Arts Center and Connecticut Science Center. *ctvisit.com*

FIGHT NIGHT

The World Series of Fighting will return to Foxwoods Resort Casino on June 17 with an impressive lineup of mixed martial arts fights, including a world heavyweight championship showdown between reigning kingpin Blagoy Ivanov (13-1) and Josh "Cuddly Bear" Copeland (13-1). *foxwoods.com*

See June 2016 calendar listings at connecticutmag.com/calendar

BLUE MAN GROUP

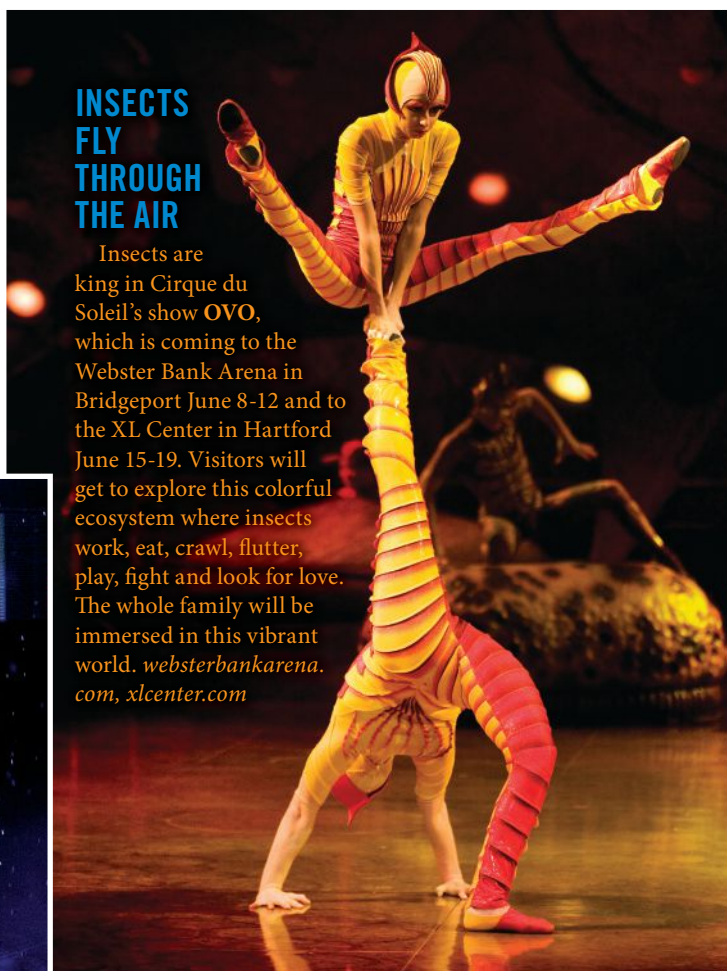
Part comedy, part theater, part rock concert and part dance party, the **Blue Man Group** has captivated 35 million people worldwide. This is an evening you won't forget. Bring the whole family to the Bushnell June 10-12! If you purchase tickets in the first three rows — the Splash Zone — you'll be given a poncho to stay nice and dry. *bushnell.org*

GREEN SPACE

Celebrate our state's beautiful, historic gardens on June 26. **Connecticut's Historic Gardens Day** is a perfect excuse to make a day trip to one of our many green spaces, including the Bellamy-Ferriday House & Garden in Bethlehem, the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme and Roseland Cottage in Woodstock. *cthistoricgardens.org*

INSECTS FLY THROUGH THE AIR

Insects are king in Cirque du Soleil's show **OVO**, which is coming to the Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport June 8-12 and to the XL Center in Hartford June 15-19. Visitors will get to explore this colorful ecosystem where insects work, eat, crawl, flutter, play, fight and look for love. The whole family will be immersed in this vibrant world. *websterbankarena.com, xlcenter.com*



DENNIS MILLER & BILL O'REILLY

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Dennis Miller calls himself a current-events comedian. Beginning in the 1980s when he was an anchor on the Weekend Update desk on *Saturday Night Live*, Miller has made a career of putting a funny, satirical spin on whatever madness is happening in the world. Currently you can see him on *The O'Reilly Factor* in a recurring segment called Miller Time, and Father's Day weekend you can see him at the Mohegan Sun Resort Casino alongside Bill O'Reilly on their *Who Wants To Be President? 2016 Tour*.

Is it fun touring with Bill O'Reilly?

It's not a tour as much as this is our fourth year out together. We go out for less than a month each year. This is probably our 40th or 50th date. I work on his show, but Bill is a busy cat. I live on the West Coast and he lives on the East Coast, so we're friends but I can't say we're age-old friends. I live 2,500 miles away, so most of the time when I see him we're out on the road.

What do you talk about in the show?

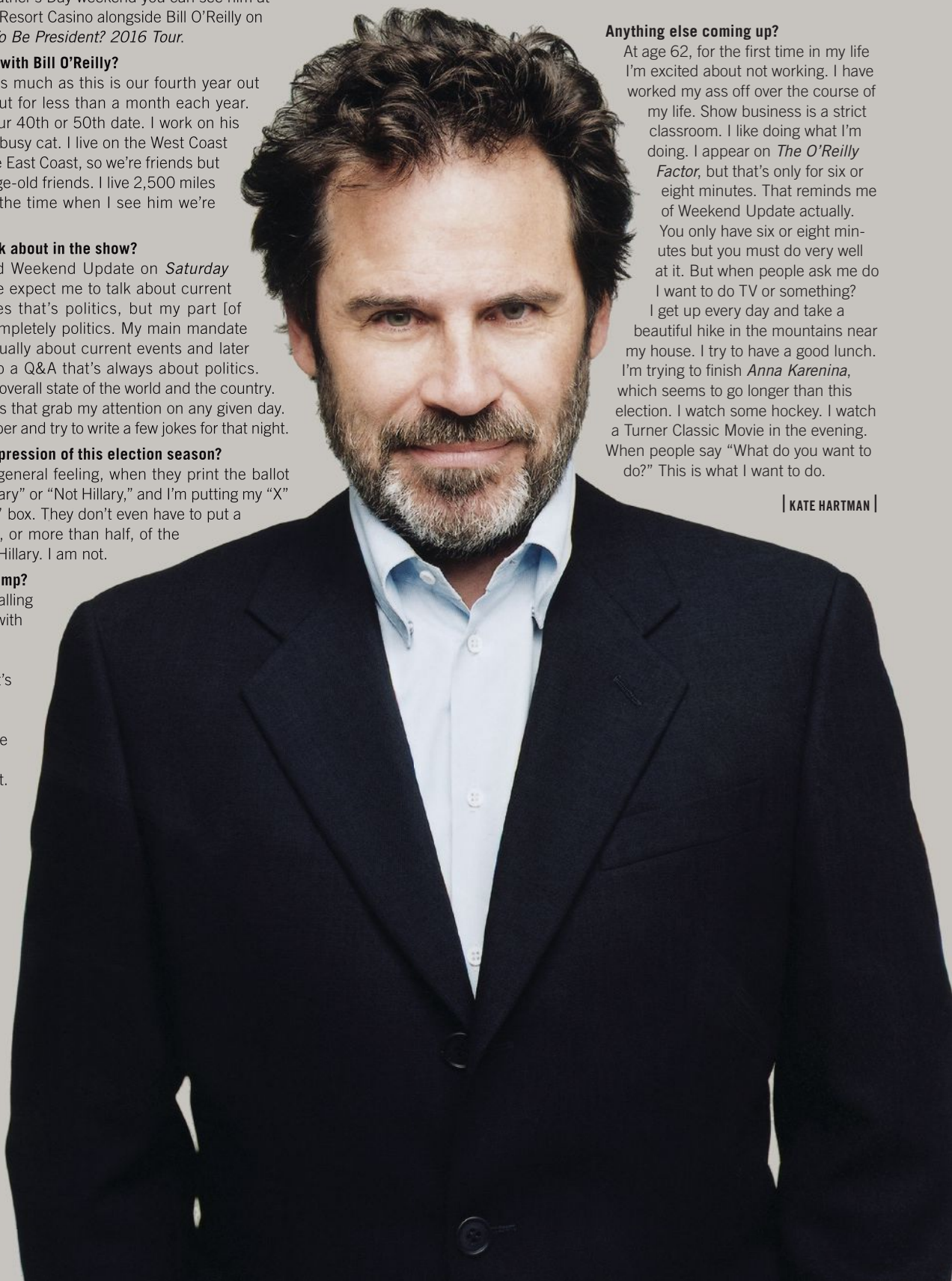
Ever since I did Weekend Update on *Saturday Night Live*, people expect me to talk about current events. Oftentimes that's politics, but my part [of the show] isn't completely politics. My main mandate is laughter. It's usually about current events and later in the show we do a Q&A that's always about politics. I like to look at the overall state of the world and the country. [I talk about] things that grab my attention on any given day. I go to the newspaper and try to write a few jokes for that night.

What is your impression of this election season?

I guess, in my general feeling, when they print the ballot they can print "Hillary" or "Not Hillary," and I'm putting my "X" in the "Not Hillary" box. They don't even have to put a name. I know half, or more than half, of the country is fond of Hillary. I am not.

Thoughts on Trump?

I stop short of calling people I disagree with Hitler-like. I don't sense anything in Donald Trump that's Hitler-like. That means only one thing, and everyone knows what that is — the Holocaust. I think everyone throws that phrase around too loosely. I don't think he's going to [exercise] the systematic liquidation of 6 million human beings. I don't think we should get along politically right now, but there are a few places I'd stop. I'd lay off of people's families and their kids, and I'd stop short of calling anyone I disagree with Hitler.



Anything else coming up?

At age 62, for the first time in my life I'm excited about not working. I have worked my ass off over the course of my life. Show business is a strict classroom. I like doing what I'm doing. I appear on *The O'Reilly Factor*, but that's only for six or eight minutes. That reminds me of Weekend Update actually. You only have six or eight minutes but you must do very well at it. But when people ask me do I want to do TV or something? I get up every day and take a beautiful hike in the mountains near my house. I try to have a good lunch. I'm trying to finish *Anna Karenina*, which seems to go longer than this election. I watch some hockey. I watch a Turner Classic Movie in the evening. When people say "What do you want to do?" This is what I want to do.

| KATE HARTMAN |

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Arts & Ideas Turns 21

WORLD PREMIERES, COMMISSIONS DEFINE THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL

BY KATE HARTMAN

The International Festival of Arts & Ideas in downtown New Haven is back and better than ever. This year the 16-day extravaganza of performances, lectures and conversations is turning 21 years old, and Executive Director Mary Lou Aleskie says it's a virtual coming of age that festival-goers will certainly notice and appreciate. The festival will take place from June 10-25.

"A festival is much more like an organic growth, like the development of a human being. We've come through our ugly-duckling phase. After two decades we've learned a lot," says Aleskie. "That's pretty exciting for us. With this coming of age, not only do we get to drink and have a party, but we're really excited about a record number of world premieres and commissions. It's all really important because it gives us an opportunity to support artists."

One such U.S. premiere is *The Money*, a new "reality TV show meets game," according to Aleskie. This live performance is unlike anything else included in the festival lineup. Taking a note from reality television shows like *The Apprentice*, people who come to *The Money* get to participate in a live-action role play in which money is on the line. There will be seven opportunities to participate over the course of the festival.

The Money
STEVE TANNER KALIDER

"If you come to this production, you decide to come either as a benefactor or a silent witness," Aleskie explains. "[Your money for admission] becomes part of a pool of money. The production is essentially benefactors working out how that money should be spent. There are no rules other than you have to decide unanimously in 90 minutes. The witnesses observe until they don't like how the conversation is going.

"It becomes a really interesting opportunity to see the nature of human beings," she

Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour
MANUEL HARLAN

continues. "It is turning into a reality show in the U.K."

The festival has also commissioned a new work by former New York City Ballet star and principal dancer Wendy Whelan and acclaimed choreographer Brian Brooks. *Some of a Thousand Words* is a beautiful combination of solos and duets set to the live music of Brooklyn Rider. The performance will make its world premiere on June 23.

Grammy Award-winning jazz composer Maria Schneider and her orchestra will perform a new work co-commissioned by the festival on June 15. With this new piece, Schneider — who recorded with David Bowie on his final album, *Black Star* — has blurred the lines between big-band jazz, poetry and chamber music.

One U.S. premiere Aleskie is particularly excited about is a show straight out of Scotland called *Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour*. She calls it "the best coming-of-age story I've experienced in my professional life." From Alan Warner, writer of the

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Wendy Whelan
PHOTO BY ERIN BAIANO

Broadway smash hit *Billy Elliot*, and Vicky Featherstone, the musical director of *Once*, this show tells the story of six Catholic school girls on the cusp of big changes.

"All they want to do is shed their uniforms and see what life's about," says Aleski. There will be more than 20 performances of *Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour* throughout the festival.

Other highlights include a free concert by godfather of funk George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic on the New Haven Green.

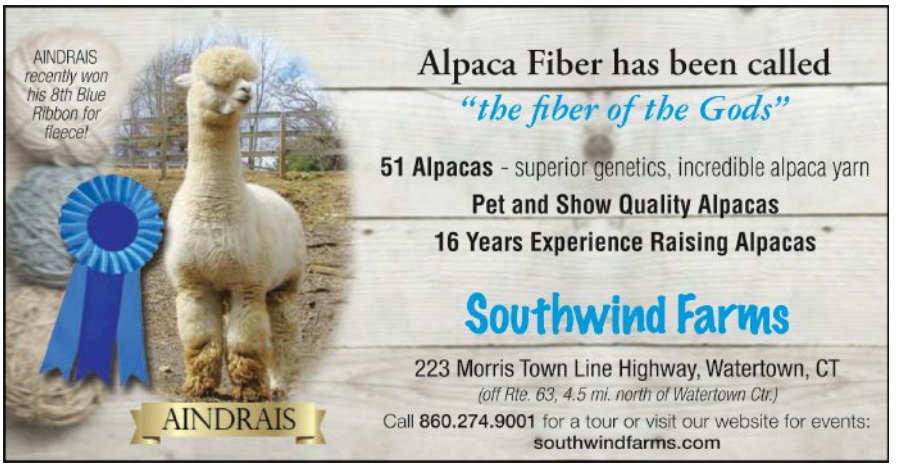
The talented acrobats of the contemporary circus Cirque Mechanics are back in a performance Aleskie calls "the largest show we've ever done outdoors for free." They will be accompanied by the New Haven Symphony Orchestra.

There will also be a wide range of lectures and conversations, including a free panel on June 14 with Nancy Baym, principal researcher for Microsoft Research New England; Jean Cook, co-director of the Artist Revenue Streams project; and musician-composer and activist Maria Schneider on music ownership in the digital age. Public policy expert, scholar and author of the acclaimed book *Unfinished Business* Anne-Marie Slaughter will also discuss gender equality in America on June 11.

But that's just scratching the surface of what's included in this year's festival. Many of the events taking place from June 10-25 are free, while others require tickets. Visit artidea.org for the full calendar of performances.

"[We want to] make it unique," Aleskie says of this year's festival. "These are performances you won't be seeing anywhere else, or at least you'll see them for the first time here."

artidea.org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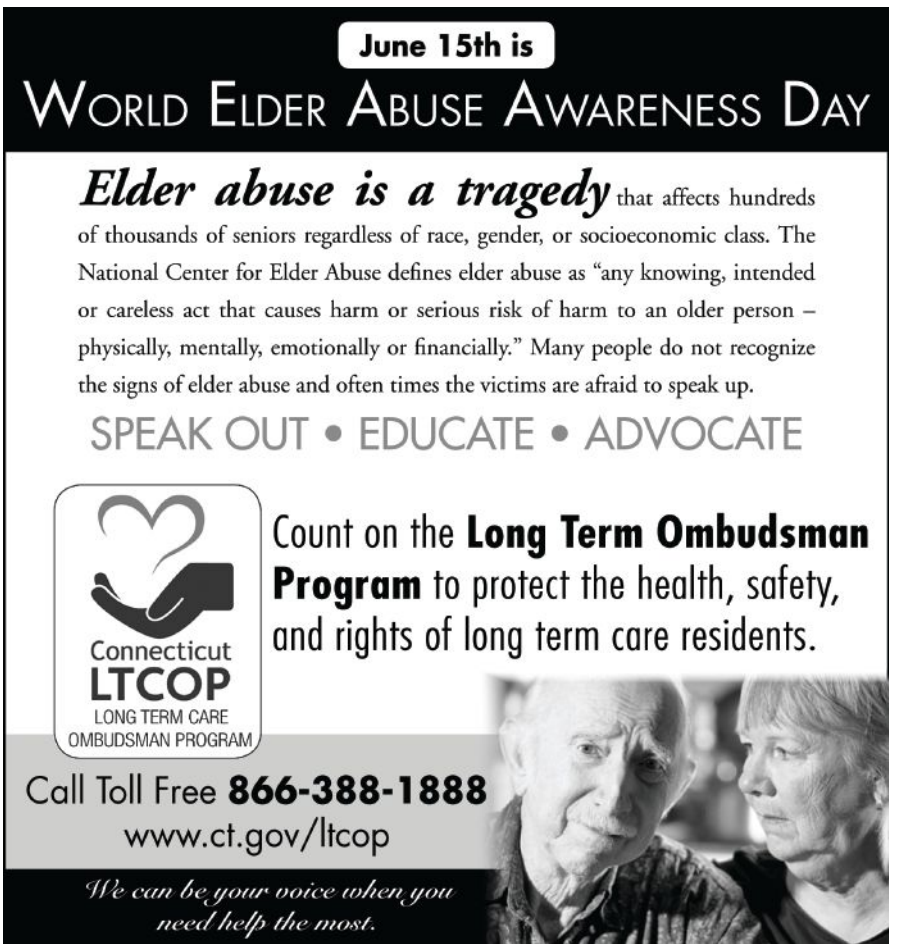
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Elder abuse is a tragedy that affects hundreds of thousands of seniors regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic class. The National Center for Elder Abuse defines elder abuse as "any knowing, intended or careless act that causes harm or serious risk of harm to an older person – physically, mentally, emotionally or financially." Many people do not recognize the signs of elder abuse and often times the victims are afraid to speak up.
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CARYN B. DAVIS

Above and opposite page, top: Island Reflections, from Dance for Peace 2015 at The Kate.

Dance for World Peace 2016

PROCEEDS PROVIDE EYE CARE IN TANZANIA

BY KATE HARTMAN

It all began with a belt.

The International Peace Belt was crafted more than 10 years ago by jewelry designer Wendy Black-Nasta in Middletown at the urging of *Hartford Courant* reporter Bill Daley, who tasked several local artisans with creating a piece of work that utilized the soon-to-be-devalued European currencies in favor of the Euro.

Black-Nasta envisioned a wearable belt that combined the coins of Europe and other countries around the world to symbolize peace between all nations. She began collecting coins, a process that took two years.

"I didn't want to buy anything," says Black-Nasta. "All of the coins were donated."

The completed belt includes coins and gems representing 115 countries. Black-Nasta hopes that one day all 191 countries of the world will be included.

Once it was finished, Black-Nasta had the International Peace Belt blessed in India. She quickly set up a website and registered her organization, Artists for World Peace, as a 501(c)(3) so people could contact her as interest in the belt grew.

Today the International Peace Belt has visited 29 countries and been worn by more than 2,500 people, including during traditional dance performances around the world. It has visited Ground Zero in New York City and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

CLAUDIA PAUL

Josephine Machuwa, left, founder and executive director of Good Hope Trust, and Wendy Black-Nasta, founder and executive director of Artists for World Peace.

More importantly, the belt has inspired many Artists for World Peace projects, including a program called Children of Peace that supports children in every country the belt visits. The organization also operates an orphanage in Tanzania that has grown exponentially in the last eight years. The team has been able to build a wheat-grinding center for the local village and a health center with an eye clinic that provides care to more than 1,000 people who never had eye care before at the orphanage.

These projects are made possible by a series of concerts Black-Nasta hosts at her home throughout the year and an annual dance performance called Dance for World Peace 2016.

"When I was in Africa I heard this Zimbabwe saying: 'If you can walk, you can dance. If you can talk, you can sing,'" says Black-Nasta. "I love that saying. In Africa everybody dances and everybody sings. It's so refreshing. I've never heard someone say they can't or they're not good at it. At that time I wanted to start Dance for World Peace with that in mind."

The fourth annual showcase, which takes place at The Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center in Old Saybrook on June 25, will bring together performers representing many cultures, including African, Native American and some contemporary dance.

"We really try to focus on the diversity of dance around the world," says the founder.

Admission to the event will go to support a mission trip the organization is planning for July and August. A 14-member team of eye doctors and assistants will provide care to the local people and work to expand the eye clinic.

"We just shipped out our container of medical supplies," says Black-Nasta. "Since I got home in August 2014, I have been working on collecting donations of equipment and eyeglasses. There was $640,000 of donated equipment in this container. That's giving us an idea of our scale now."

Artists for World Peace has partnered with the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine and has plans to open a dental clinic in Tanzania next year.

Admission to Dance for World Peace 2016 is $40 and attendees are encouraged to buy in advance on The Kate's website (thekate.org). The event will take place on June 25 at 8 p.m.

artistsforworldpeace.org

Mama Wendy with some of her Children of Peace at the Good Hope Trust Orphanage Center in Kibosho-Umbwe, Tanzania, in 2014.
CLAUDIA PAUL

5 Arts on Display

BY KATE HARTMAN

Connecticut is full of artists. Whether they create for a living or do it as a hobby, there are countless people expressing their creativity every day. They are an untapped resource deserving of notice, and that's what the coordinators of the 5 Arts Connecticut showcase are attempting to do with their two-day event on June 10-11 at the Charter Oak Cultural Center in Hartford.

> *"It can be easy for young people to be talked out of the arts. We love holding this up as a model for Neighborhood Studios."*

Middletown resident Kelly DiMauro launched the first 5 Arts event in 2010 as a way to gain a wider audience for a play he was producing through his theater company, Middle City Stage Company. He brought in a professional musician, displayed the work of some local gallery artists and showed a film written by his daughter. 5 Arts Connecticut was born.

The name 5 Arts refers to the disciplines of theater, film, music, visual art and poetry.

At this year's event, each night will open with a gallery reception at 7 p.m. featuring the work of three local artists — one of whom is Syd Hertz, who died in February after living in Stamford for most of her life, creating beautiful artwork. Music will be provided by local band The Professors of Sweet Sweet Music (The POSSM), and then a collection of one-act plays, films and poetry will fill the evening beginning at 8 p.m.

The organization has been collecting submissions for several months to decide which pieces will be featured.

"We want to cover the state and really show what's out there," says event co-producer Cie Peterson.

DiMauro produced two 5 Arts Connecticut showcases in the past, the first in 2010 and the second in 2013, at the Buttonwood Tree in Middletown. He wasn't sure he would produce a third, but when Peterson, a local acting coach and voiceover artist, reached out and expressed interest in getting involved, he was re-inspired.

"I thought, what a wonderful idea," says Peterson. "We didn't really know each other but we decided to make this a working partnership. It has been so successful."

Together theyw have reviewed every submitted work and say they are pleased with the level of submissions and how similar they have felt about each piece.

"Every time we have been on the same level," says DiMauro. "Things that I don't like about plays, she felt exactly the same way, and things I specifically liked about plays, she felt the same way. We have the same thinking process."

Peterson has bumped up the visibility and professionalism of the event with sponsorships and partnerships. Proceeds will support the Greater Hartford Arts Council Neighborhood Studios program, a nationally recognized summer arts apprenticeship program for area teenagers.

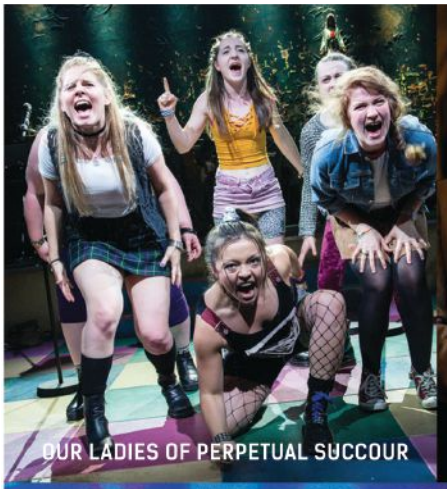
"We love the idea of people who do this for a living or not as a living [acting as] a model for teenagers," says Peterson. "It can be easy for young people to be talked out of the arts. We love holding this up as a model for Neighborhood Studios."

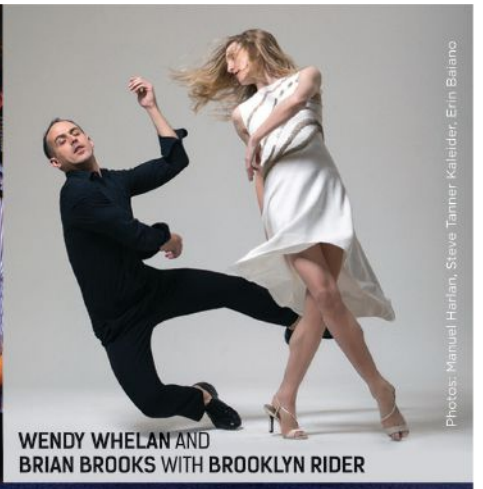
Both producers hope to see the 5 Arts Connecticut showcase become an annual event. DiMauro says when he eventually hands the reins to Peterson, he is confident "it's going to be left in good hands."

Tickets will be available through the Charter Oak Cultural Center.

"We hope to use this as a way to find emerging artists," says Peterson. "Wouldn't that be lovely, if we really start discovering our local talent and then send them out into the world to create art and be seen? We can create this beautiful forward momentum of artists helping artists. I think the potential is infinite."

charteroakcenter.org





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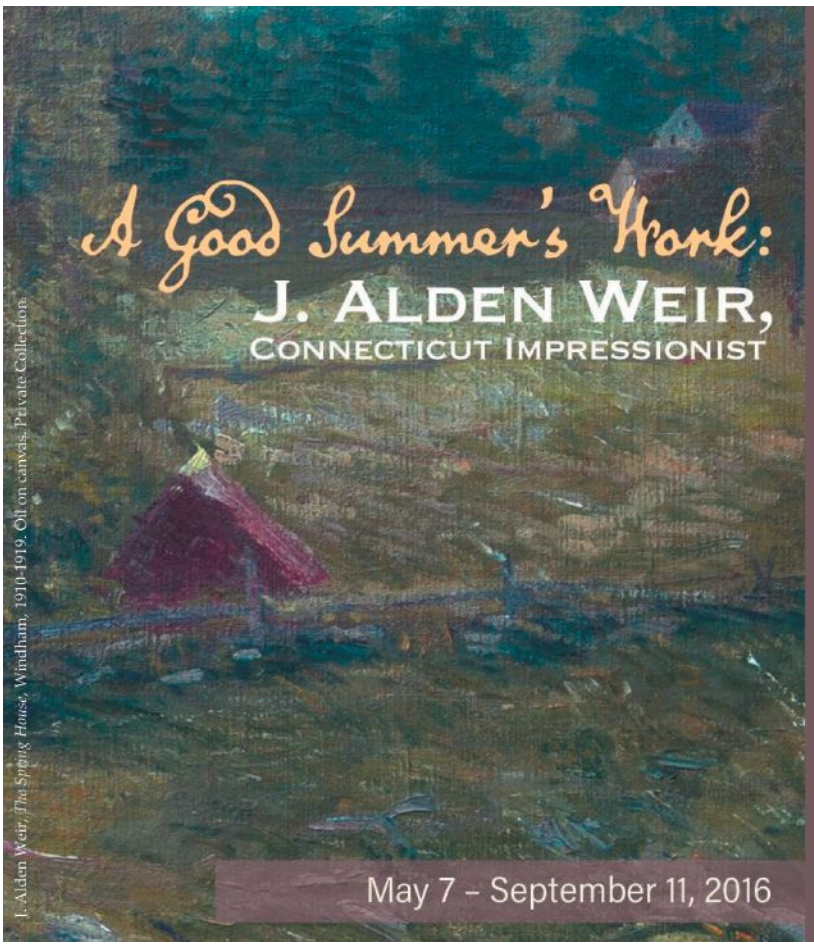

J. Alden Weir, *The Spring House*, Windham, 1910-1919. Oil on canvas. Private Collection.

Bringing together for the first time more than forty works from museums and private collections across the country, the exhibit showcases the works of Weir, Childe Hassam, Emil Carlsen and John Singer Sargent in eastern Connecticut.

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London Calling

Rob Ruggiero found himself chatting with Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber and other celebs of the English stage not too long ago at the opening of the hit revival of *Show Boat* in London's West End. The producing artistic director of Hartford's TheaterWorks was there because it was his intimate adaptation of the classic musical — which he first did for the Goodspeed Opera House in 2011 — that was making its London bow. Ruggiero put the focus of the show on the relationship of the characters, while retaining the show's historic sweep. Rodgers & Hammerstein: An Imagem Company, which licenses the musical, liked it so much that it made Ruggiero's version one of three that theaters could now choose to do — along with the 1946 and 1994 scripts, which call for huge productions. Ruggiero's version is seen as more likely to be the go-to version because of its more production-friendly size — 25 in cast, an orchestra of 11 — and dramatic efficiency. (And, yes, he and Goodspeed share modestly in royalties.)

"It's another piece of a legacy and I couldn't be more proud to be associated with the show that changed the American musical," Ruggiero tells me. "It's humbling." He also credits Goodspeed producer Donna Lynn Cooper Hilton for suggesting the project, making him believe it could be done on the minuscule East Haddam stage, and bringing it to fruition. That production was named best musical that season by the Connecticut Critics Circle.

JOHAN PERSSON, PERSSONPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

The London cast of *Showboat*.

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CONNECTICUT'S 'TONYS'

And which show will be named show of the show by the state's critics *this* year? Come to the free annual awards ceremony on June 13 at 7:30 p.m. at Hartford Stage and find out. Will Hartford Stage's *Anastasia*, Long Wharf's *My Paris*, Ivoryton's *South Pacific* or Goodspeed's *La Cage Aux Folles* win for best musical — or even be nominated? Or is there a sleeper ready to grab that top prize? And which play, actors, directors and designers will nab the coveted awards? It's always an entertaining and emotional event, and really, it's the only time Connecticut's theater artists — and their fans — come together as a community to celebrate the amazing work on the state's stages. *ctcritics.org*

RE-IMAGINING *GREASEPAINT*

Forget British invasions — Goodspeed is hosting an Australian one. For its first show at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, David Harris from Down Under is singing a boatload of Cole Porter songs in *Anything Goes.* Now another Aussie, Tony Sheldon — who received a Tony Award nomination for his role in the dragtastic Broadway musical *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* — is over at Goodspeed's Norma Terris Theatre in Chester in the "developmental production" (that means the show isn't ready for critics) of *The Roar of the Greasepaint/The Smell of the Crowd.*

The metaphorical fable didn't exactly enrapture audiences when it opened on Broadway in 1965, but it produced some hit songs from Anthony Newley (who also starred) and Leslie Bricusse, now 85. Goodspeed director Don Stephenson (*Guys and Dolls*) received permission to re-shape it for the Connecticut run. Sheldon, who was previously at Goodspeed as Horace Vandergelder in *Hello, Dolly!*, says Stephenson has Americanized it and now has a clear theme. ("It's about survival and not the English class system," he tells me). It also has a sharply reduced cast (who the hell were those urchins anyway?) and an adjustment or two to contemporary times (there's no longer the character named "The Negro").

Sheldon plays the role originated by ever-imperialistic Cyril Richard, best known as Captain Hook in *Peter Pan* starring Mary Martin. His character of "Sir," he says, represents a terrorizing authority figure. "I think it's very timely with authority figures now spreading fear and telling us that we have to listen to them or else we're doomed." Cue "Who Can I Turn To (When Nobody Needs Me)." *goodspeed.org*

PHOTO BY DIANE SOBOLEWSKI

Tony Sheldon in rehearsal for *The Roar of the Greasepaint.*

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DINNER FOR ONE

Playwright Becky Mode tells me she takes great pride in Lin-Manuel Miranda, the creator of *Hamilton*, because she, too, is a graduate of Wesleyan University in Middletown. Miranda, who developed his first musical, *In the Heights,* when he was an undergrad there, graduated in 2002, and Mode, *ahem,* some years before.

But Mode's not doing badly herself these days. Her 1999 play *Fully Committed* has been updated to take advantage of the latest food and celebrity trends and is now running on Broadway starring Jesse Tyler Ferguson (TV's *Modern Family*) in the solo show that centers on the frazzled taker of reservations at the hottest restaurant in Manhattan.

Mode has mostly been focused on her TV gigs: with *Four Stars* (about the military, not the Michelin Guide) and AMC's new show, *Feed the Beast* ("about an alcoholic sommelier and cokehead chef").

And does she have the nerve to throw her weight around to get that must-have reservation at the latest hot bistro when she's in New York? "Sadly no," she laughs. "I just don't have that moxie." *fullycommittedbroadway.com*

MARA LAVITT

Adam Gopnik, left, and Steve Martin.

THE *HAMILTON!* EFFECT

What goes through a musical theater writer's mind when they see *Hamilton*? Are they inspired, does it make them rethink their own craft or do they just give up?

I asked *New Yorker* writer Adam Gopnik that question because the musical he's been working on for years, *Table*, has just been announced for Long Wharf Theatre's upcoming season (along with the premiere of a new Steve Martin play, *Meteor Shower*; another premiere, *Napoli, Brooklyn*; Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* with Brian Dennehy and John Douglas Thomas; a revival of *Other People's Money* and Lydia R. Diamond's recent off-Broadway hit, *Smart People*).

A few months back Gopnik wrote a piece for the *New Yorker* calling *Hamilton* "the musical of the Obama era as much as *Camelot* was of the Kennedy era."

"The real lesson of *Hamilton* is not that everything has to be a hip-hop musical but that the form is more open than it's ever been," he told me. "It's given writers new freedom."

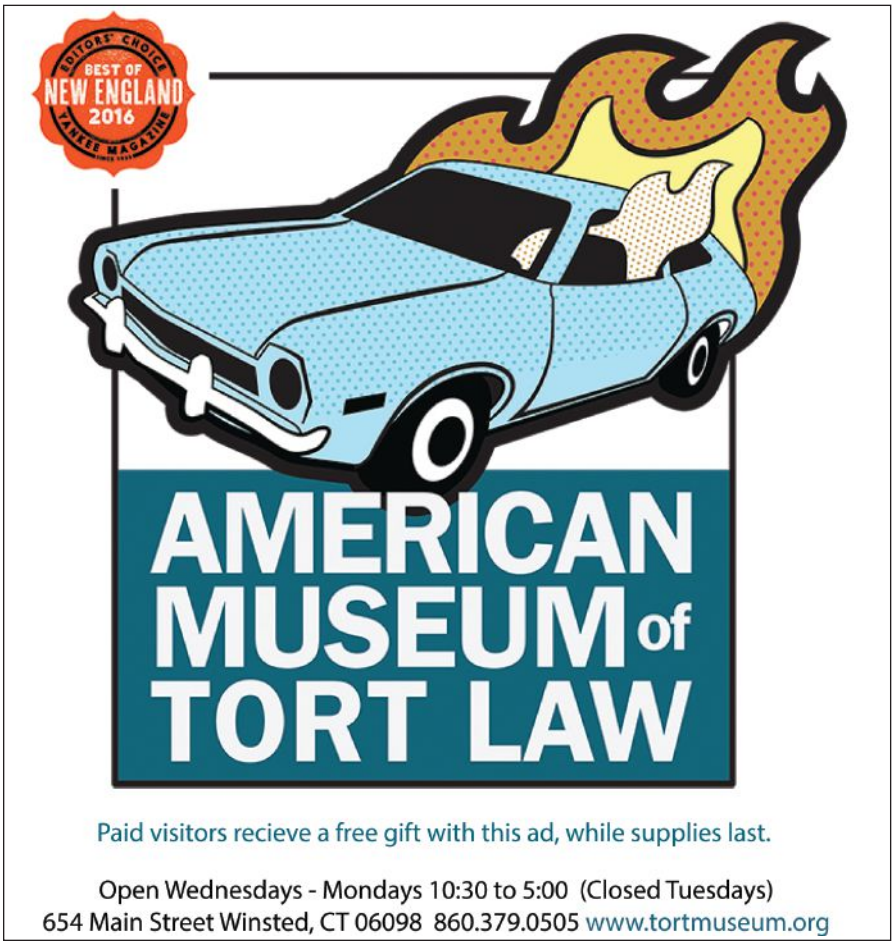
And no, he doesn't see an oncoming flood of hip-hop musicals about American history. "It's like when the album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* came out. It you tried to imitate that it would just fall flat. But it allows others to explore other parts of the musical form."

For those who can't wait until *Table* is set for May 2017, Gopnik will also be presenting *Through the Gates*, an hour of New York storytelling, at New Haven's International Festival of Arts & Ideas on June 12 at 5 p.m. at Long Wharf Theatre. *artidea.org, longwharf.org*

AL ALONE

Is this a new form of entertainment: a staged "conversation" with a star? If so, count me in. I remember attending *An Evening With Cary Grant* in Stamford in the '80s, and though he didn't say anything I didn't know already, I still think fondly back on that night. I missed the recent night with Sophia Loren at Foxwoods. (I had a lovely interview with her in the '90s and yes, it was a rare time when I was completely smitten.) But there's another biggie coming in June: *An Evening with Al Pacino* is set for the Grand Theater at Foxwoods on June 3 at 8 p.m. *foxwoods.com*

Frank Rizzo has covered the arts-entertainment scene in Connecticut since disco reigned in the '70s, including nearly 34 years writing for The Hartford Courant. Email him at FrRiz@aol.com. Follow him on Twitter@ShowRiz.



WITH KEVIN HUNT

How To Be a Costco Strategist

With a warehouse club opening last fall in New Britain, another due to arrive in East Lyme next year (and some wetlands-wrangling over yet another in Branford), Costco has now dropped its discount stake into every region of Connecticut except the northern corners.

As new stores open, new stories come with them. Warren Buffett has a Costco story. He has owned more than 4 million Costco shares, perhaps because it's a company operated not unlike a Berkshire Hathaway holding. Costco keeps markups skin-tight (about 15 percent) and makes its money on annual memberships that start at $55.

Perhaps the following characters will help you decide on your own Costco/Sam's/BJ's warehouse club story.

The Lurker

In the online world, "lurker" describes a frequent visitor to a forum or chat room who looks but doesn't contribute.

In the real world, a Costco non-member can almost feel the warm and fuzzy tingle of membership with free access to the warehouse club's pharmacy, health screenings and liquor store.

The lurker's refusal to join is more complex than a flat vote against the annual $55 membership. (See Conscientious Objector below.) The Costco lurker belongs to his own secret, no-fee club: The collection of non-members who know the privileges of non-membership.

Pharmacy: Costco, Sam's and other warehouses sell prescription drugs to non-members. A *Consumer Reports* survey aided by secret shoppers found Costco's prices for generics lower than any other pharmacy in the survey.

Costco kills the competition on medications like escitalopram, a generic version of the popular antidepressant Lexapro, at $10.20 for 30 tablets (10 milligrams). For the same generic, Walmart charges $117.81 and CVS $111.99. (The local CVS keeps discount cards available, so always ask.) A "Make A Wish" card reduces the escitalopram cost by as much as 50 percent.

The CONNsumer, however, advises extreme caution when shopping for low-priced generics without using an insurance card. Costco is good, but not always the best.

Target's pharmacy, in the midst of a takeover by CVS, still has a substantial list of $4 generics for a 30-day supply, though now only available after signing up for ScriptSave, a discount program that will also send you health-care offers. (Ask for information at the pharmacy.)

Check Sam's, Wal-Mart and Walgreens' Prescription Savings Club — $20 membership fee or $35 for a family — which offers discounts on three tiers of generics, starting at $5 for a 30-day supply. (Visit bit.ly/1zz1VNp.)

Costco's health screenings and immunizations are also open to non-members. Most recently, in April, Connecticut Costcos offered free osteoporosis screenings.

Liquor store: Because state laws prohibit alcohol clubs, anyone can shop at Costco's liquor stores. Like the pharmacy, it pays to shop generics.

Leave your wine snobbery at Costco's door, next to the SUV-size shopping carts. Costco wine is priced up to 20 percent less than at other wine stores and its signature Kirkland label is produced by some of the top wineries. Check *Wine Spectator*, which says Girard Winery makes Costco's Napa Cabernets and blends, and the blog devoted to Costco wines, the costcowineblog.com.

The blog compares a current top Kirkland pick, the 2013 Signature Series Napa Cab ($19.99), to wines that cost twice as much.

Costco allocates much less space to beer, often brand-name seasonals, but watch for bargains here, too. During a March scouting mission, the CONNsumer spotted a shrink-wrapped trio of Guinness draft eight-packs for $32.99, about 20 percent less than other liquor stores.

The Conscientious Objector

The Costco Conscientious Objector profiles as a middle-aged man who drives a first-generation Prius and refuses to pay to join anything — even AAA — because that's what his father did.

The CO can preserve the family heritage by asking a member to buy him a Costco Cash Card, which he can use in the store or at costco.com. Sweet!

The Strategist

The Strategist thinks he knows more than anyone else, member or non-member, because he knows how to break the Costco pricing code.

The Strategist isn't exactly a Navajo Code Talker, but he can spot a bargain within a bargain at Costco by tracking the last two digits of prices. If it's $.99, that item is full price. If it's $.97, $.88 or $.00, it's marked down.

A Costco employee, when asked if the Guinness shrink-wrapped deal was a regularly stocked item, pointed to the store's price label: An asterisk after the price indicates clearance or discontinued. Guinness wasn't coming back, until maybe next St. Patrick's Day season.

The One And Done

The One And Done Costco member, possibly a former Lurker, joins only when enticed by a big-ticket item. Then he quits.

Automotive needs, whether tires or a vehicle, are a big membership pusher. Costco last year sold 465,000 vehicles through its no-haggle (or mild-haggle) partnerships with 3,000 auto dealers, making it the country's No. 2 auto retailer.

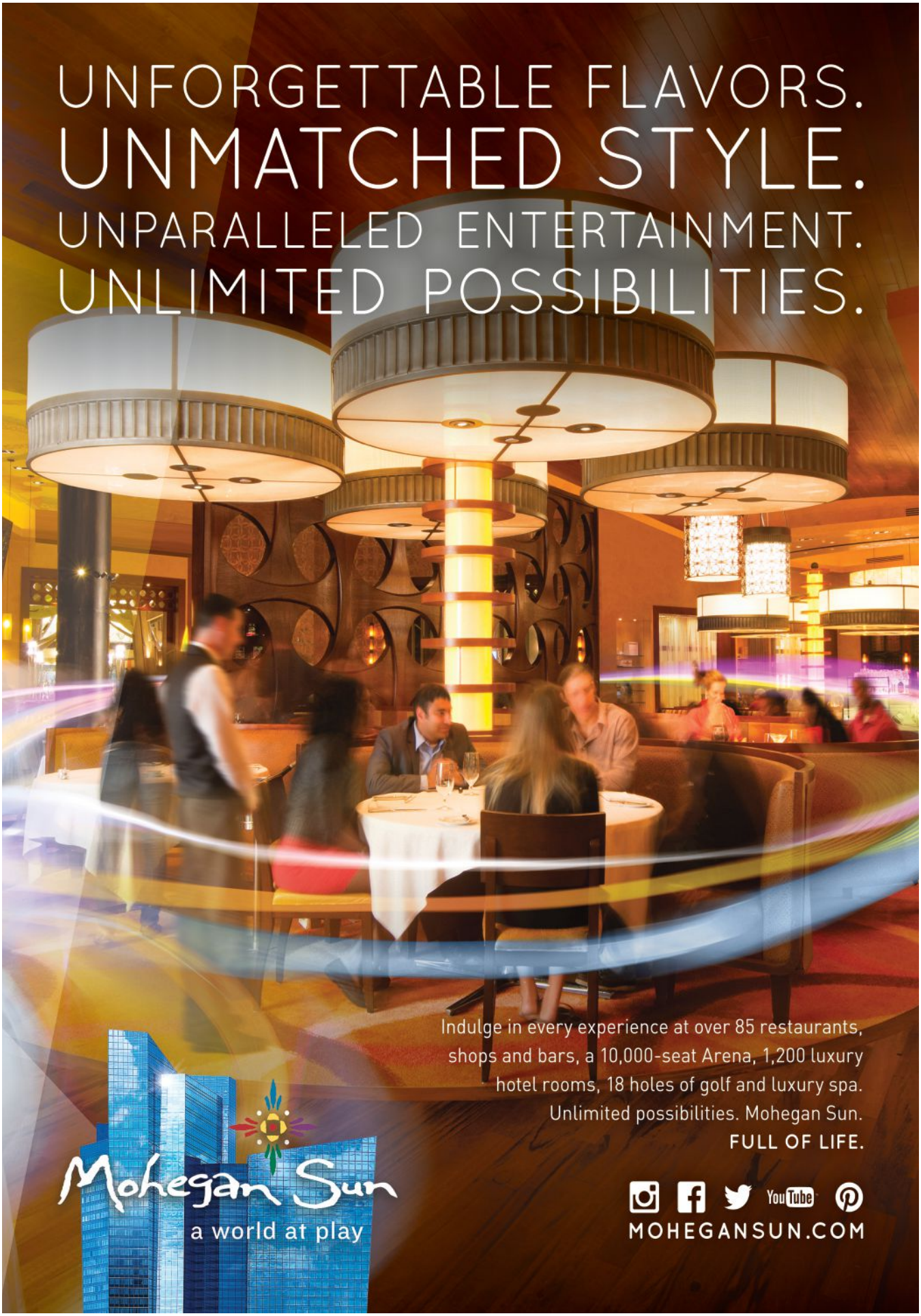
Costco's auto clout is evident now with its special-edition Chevrolet Silverado 1500 LTZ Crew Cab, available through May 31 or until the 5,000 titans sell out. Costco members get the GM supplier discount.

The CONNsumer envied Costco's prices on to-die-for Irish cheese and butter from afar before finally joining last year, enticed by a winter-tire bargain. When his mechanic quoted him $900 on a set of Michelins and tried to talk him down to a more affordable brand, the CONNsumer looked up Costco's prices. The price, before tax and including mounting, balancing and nitrogen tire inflation, was $473.96. Swapping tires at the end of winter cost $10 each.

Maybe Town Fair Tire could have matched the deal.

But it couldn't match the full-year membership to Costco that came with it. At the very least, it's a year of discount Irish cheese and butter.

Send your consumer complaints, concerns and tips to CONNsumer@connecticutmag.com.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Mystic Country

By MICHELLE BODAK ACRI

Mystic Kids: Here comes the sun

The sky is blue, the sun is bright and there's the fresh scent of salt in the air — it must be June in Mystic Country. Tall ships and toy boats, fireflies and kite flies, Demi Lovato and Shawn Mendes — oh, yeah, we've got it going on in Mystic this summer. And who better to share it with than the little ones you love? So gather up the kids, silence that cell and head right on out the door. Family fun in the sun is our specialty, and summer, glorious summer, awaits!

She shoots, she scores!

Mohegan Sun's (888-226-7711 or mohegansun.com) very own WNBA team, the Connecticut Sun, call Mohegan Sun Arena "home." June dates include the Atlanta Dream (June 3), the Seattle Storm (June 10), the Washington Mystics (June 14) and the San Antonio Stars (June 19).

Other hot tickets include 5 Seconds of Summer on June 30 and July 1, Demi Lovato and Nick Jonas on July 6, Josh Groban on July 29 and Shawn Mendes on Aug. 19.

As for family-friendly eats, Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville (balloon hats for everyone!), Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana, jumpin' and jivin' Johnny Rockets, Bobby's Burger Palace and Jersey Mike's (for killer subs) top the list. Or you can bring the whole gang to Sun BBQFest 2016 on June 11 and 12. Festivities include live music, barbeque battles and a fireworks show.

Should you decide to get in a little shopping, faves include Spin Street, which boasts an extensive selection of cutting-edge electronics and video games, and Dylan's Candy Bar, loaded with more than 5,000 (!) types of candy from floor to ceiling. The Shops at Mohegan Sun also features Kids Quest, which offers licensed, supervised childcare for children aged six weeks to 12 years. Little ones live it up in hot spots like the Karaoke Star Stage, Apt. Q, Quest Café and the Movie Spot, while Cyber Quest, a state-of-the-art arcade, is where you'll find the big kids (follow the buzz).

Home port advantage

There are scores of historic boats you can climb aboard at **Mystic Seaport** (860-572-0711 or mysticseaport.org) — the *Charles W. Morgan*, the last of an American whaling fleet that once numbered more than 2,700, and the *L.A. Dunton*, the last of the early-20th-century New England fishing schooners, to name but two. But did you know that there are several you can ride aboard or pilot yourself? Waterfront cruises and rentals are now available at the Seaport Boathouse through Columbus Day. Sign up for a waterfront tour aboard the launches *Necessity* or *Liberty*, a sail aboard the *Breck Marshall*, a 20-foot Crosby catboat reproduction, or rent a classic wooden rowboat or a sailboat to do a little "high-seas" exploration of your own.

Seasonal fun for the little ones includes the chance to craft their own toy boat; "swab" the decks at the Children's Museum; explore "Force in Motion at Sea," in the Discovery Barn, check out a "Nav Quest" kit in the Nautical Instruments Shop and create while in Home Port, the museum's new family activity center that's designed to provide kids 8 to 12 with a variety of crafts and amusements.

The 37th annual Sea Music Festival, June 9 to 12, provides visitors the opportunity to hear national and international performers, along with the museum's chantey staff, perform music from the Golden Age of Sail through contemporary compositions. The 25th annual WoodenBoat Show will take place June 24 to 26 and offer something for all wooden-boat enthusiasts and marine-history buffs. Or, for flag-waving family fun, plan your visit for July Fourth and the seaport's Independence Day Celebration circa 1876, which will include boat races, 19th-century lawn games, a parade and a concert by the Mystic Silver Cornet Band.

Out and about

The Bowerbird (860-434-3562 or thebowerbird.com) in Old Lyme specializes in what the friendly folk here like to call "impulsive necessities™" — some 4,500 square feet of them from roughly 2,000 different vendors as a matter of fact. We're talking anything and everything: gadgets for your kitchen and gizmos for your pet, snazzy jewelry, the entire Vera Bradley collection, gourmet goodies, custom stationery, books, garden accessories, and, because summer is all about getting the kids outside, loads of cool stuff for kids looking to head outdoors in their quest for summer fun. Expect zip lines, sky-saucer swings, water slides, jump ropes, slack lines and things to throw, launch, hit and bounce. Catch a bug, hatch a butterfly, blow giant bubbles or simply let the kiddos lounge at the beach on their own towel — The Bowerbird covers a lot of bases! Top contenders on our list include the incredibly bouncy Y'all Ball (it's a whopping 32 inches in diameter!), Hit Mitts, which are worn over the hand like a glove and allow you to "become" the paddle, a Ring Stix launch game that glows in the night and Creature Peepers, kid- (and bug-) friendly viewers that allow backyard explorers to view their finds from both above and below. Ladybugs and crickets and fireflies — oh my!

Roughing it

When last we checked in on **Abbott's Lobster in the Rough** (860-536-7719 or abbottslobster.com) in Noank via its website, there were three days, three hours, seven minutes and 11 seconds until the start of the 2016 season. Yes, this legendary lobster shack, a fixture on the Mystic River since 1947, is that popular.

Served "in the rough" at picnic tables at the edge of the water, Abbott's lobsters (1¼ pounders up to 10-pound whoppers) are "flavor famous" across the nation. Its celebrated hot lobster roll, a Connecticut original, contains a quarter pound of lobster meat drenched in melted creamery butter and mounded on a toasted bun — a thing of beauty that's repeatedly earned *Connecticut Magazine*'s "Best of Connecticut" award.

Abbott's Lobster in the Rough, in Noank

There's also stuffed clams, oysters on the half shell, crab and the great New England Seafood Feast: clam chowder and shrimp in the rough, a heaping bowl of steamers and mussels, and a succulent Abbott's steamed lobster. Our goal this summer? The new LOL hot lobster roll: lots of lobster (one full pound!) on a giant freshly baked bun. Go big or go home!

P.S. In case you need an excuse: June 15 is National Lobster Day.

Extra tartar, please

More of a fry guy — or gal? Abbott's sister restaurant **Costellos's Clam Shack** (860-572-2779 or costellosclamshack.com) has got you covered. Costello's, tucked inside the Noank Shipyard, also offers dockside dining on the Mystic River — not to mention a spectacular three-state waterview. The specialty here, however, is fried seafood. Think sweet whole-belly clams, a fish & chip dinner featuring not one but two pieces of center-cut North Atlantic cod, plump coconut-breaded shrimp and freshly shucked oysters, seasoned and fried. There's also fish tacos, a new favorite that combines cod, mango salsa, cabbage and Costello's special taco sauce; succulent bacon-wrapped scallops; wild salmon grilled with homemade rosemary-lemon butter; burgers; dogs; and, because you can never have too much lobster, a few favorites from Abbott's menu. There's also live music on Wednesdays from 6 to 8:30 p.m. — see you there!

Pillow talk

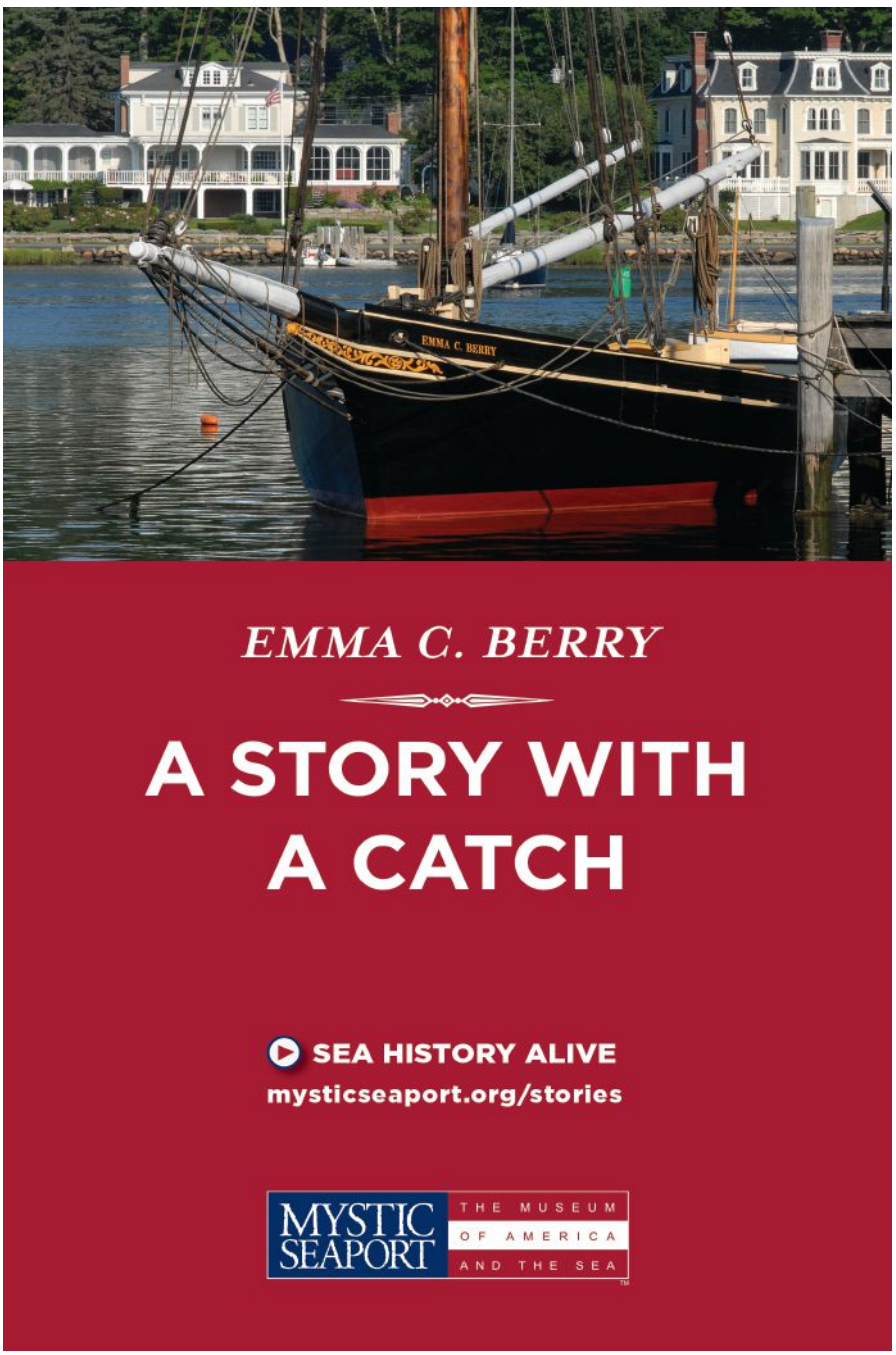
The building that now houses the **Old Lyme Inn** (860-434-2600 or oldlymeinn.com) was constructed circa 1856 by the Champlain family and was the center of a 300-acre working farm. In fact, at

the turn of the century many of Old Lyme's famous Impressionist artists hauled their painting wagons into the farm's fields and used its barn as a studio.

Each of the 13 guest rooms here has been fully renovated. The eight modern rooms have flat-screen televisions, gas fireplaces and heated bathroom floors, while the remaining traditional rooms have their own bathrooms (but don't have televisions). There is free Wi-Fi throughout the property.

At the restaurant, menus change seasonally in order to encompass locally sourced produce, meats and seafood, and dishes run the gamut from traditional selections to unique combinations that will challenge the way you think about food. Options may include grilled flat-iron steak over roasted-garlic/white-truffle potato purée with wild mushrooms, summer steak sauce and chive oil, or New England baked haddock served over mashed potatoes and asparagus and finished with a white wine and sage pan sauce. A children's menu covers kid-friendly favorites like fish and chips, chicken tenders and homemade mac and cheese. For dessert? S'mores by the fire pit, of course!

Tuesday night at the inn is "Two for Tuesday": two appetizers, two entrées and a shared dessert for $50. Wednesday night is "Wine Down Time" featuring wine by the bottle and glass specials. Every Wednesday night from Memorial Day until Labor Day there's blues music on the patio under the inn's majestic maple tree: Ramblin' Dan Stevens and his Mellow Men provide music and entertainment. The good times continue with half-price martinis and the swinging sound of the Old Lyme Inn house band led by Steve Donovan, piano, Mike Assetta, bass, and the irrepressible Ken Kitchings on drums. The summer lineup at the inn's SideDoor Jazz Club, named one of *DownBeat* magazine's 2016 Best International Jazz Venues, includes Greg Abate and Richie Cole celebrating Phil Woods (June 2), Mike LeDonne's Groover Trio (June 4), the Duane Eubanks Quartet (June 10), Christos Rafalides & Manhattan Vibes (June 18), Tessa Souter (June 24), the Jon Regen Quartet (July 2) and the Tadataka Unno Trio (July 9).



Oh, Miki

Things are really hopping at **Mystic Aquarium** (860-572-5955 or mysticaquarium.org) this summer: "Exploration: WILD," which opened over Memorial Day weekend, introduces visitors to more than 30 species of frogs. "Birds of the Outback," which features hundreds of birds from Down Under (budgies, cockatiels, parrots …) flying free in a 1,200-square-foot aviary, has returned for the season; a new animal-encounter program lets you get up close and personal with one of the aquarium's beloved harbor seals; there's a rollicking new sea-lion show: "California Dreamin' — Living with and Loving California Sea Lions" and then there's our guy Miki. The newest addition to the "Atlantic Coast" exhibit, Miki, a big ol' beluga who weighs about 1,100 pounds (would you believe his name actually means "little" in Inupiaq?), is known to "porpoise" himself out of the water, almost as high and as gracefully as a dolphin! There's so much going on, in fact, that the aquarium will be staying open until 9 p.m. every Monday from June 27 to Aug. 29.

Into the woods

The Treehouse Arcade at **Foxwoods Resort Casino** (800-FOXWOODS or foxwoods.com), at nine-million square feet the largest resort casino in North America, boasts more than 100 video games of yesterday and today — think Candy Crush, Ms. Pac-Man, Wheel of Fortune, Connect Four and more. Retro-chic High Rollers Luxury Lanes offers family-friendly bowling before 8 p.m. Kid-friendly restaurants include California Pizza Kitchen for fresh Cali creativity and Junior's for a taste of Brooklyn. Then there's Lick, billed as the "ultimate candy shop," which tempts with everything from confectionery classics to souvenir novelties from around the world. Finally, Tanger Outlets at Foxwoods, which opened in May 2015, boasts some 80 shops. Its kid-centric shops include Old Navy Outlet, Gymboree Outlet and GO! Toys and Games.

Olde-fashioned

As far as we're concerned, the lobster grilled cheese at Bleu Squid is reason enough to visit **Olde Mistick Village** (860-536-4941 or oldemistickvillage.com). That being said, this collection of 50 shops and eateries designed to represent an 18th-century New England village, offers so much more. Mystic Kite Shop has one of the largest collections of whirligigs, kites and balloons around. Penguins, Otters and Others is your go-to for marine-life gifts and souvenirs. The Toy Soldier, the first store to open back in 1973, has toys for kids of all ages. The kids will most definitely want some fudge from Franklin's General Store or fried dough from the BoardWalk, but there are also restaurants like the Steak Loft of Mystic, Go Fish and Mango's Wood-Fired Pizza Co. to keep the whole family happy. You can sample many of them from June 10-12, at the annual Taste of Mystic. To top it off, there's Mystic Luxury Cinemas should you want to take in a summer flick — "Finding Dory" debuts June 16!

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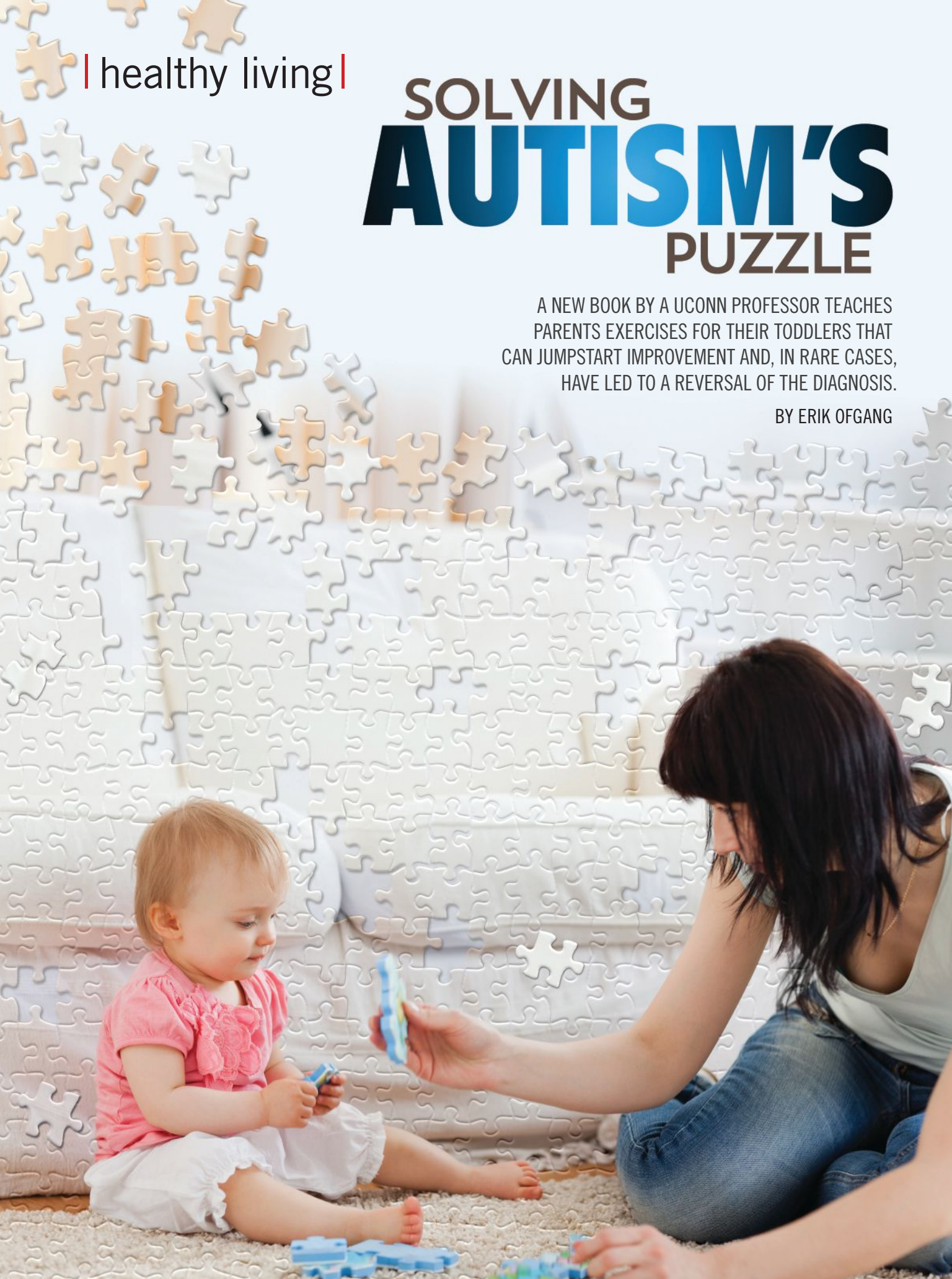
SOLVING AUTISM'S PUZZLE

A NEW BOOK BY A UCONN PROFESSOR TEACHES PARENTS EXERCISES FOR THEIR TODDLERS THAT CAN JUMPSTART IMPROVEMENT AND, IN RARE CASES, HAVE LED TO A REVERSAL OF THE DIAGNOSIS.

BY ERIK OFGANG



Jake Exkorn began to change when he was 17 months old. He stopped playing, relating to other children and adults, making eye contact and responding to his name. Initially his parents thought he was deaf. Jake — his parents would later learn — had autism.

Jake at age 3.

After research and treatment efforts, Jake's parents had him engage in an immersive, 40-hour-per-week regimen of applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy, an intensive behavioral therapy conducted one-on-one and targeted to individuals. Over time, something happened that appears to occur only in a small percentage of children who receive early intervention, something which science can't fully explain yet and some experts remain skeptical of. He got better.

OPTIMAL OUTCOMES

Several years ago, Deborah Fein, a neuropsychologist and University of Connecticut Board of Trustees distinguished professor of psychological sciences, became interested in Jake and a small but significant number of others like him. In her own practice she had noticed that patients who received early diagnoses of autism and underwent ABA treatment improved. "If they were getting good treatment, some of them were making amazing progress," she says. "After two or three years, some of them no longer met criteria for autism."

12 RULES to Play By

According to the book *The Activity Kit for Babies and Toddlers at Risk: How to Use Everyday Routines to Build Social and Communication Skills*, by Deborah Fein, Ph.D., Molly Helt, Ph.D., Lynn Brennan, BCBA-D, and Marianne Barton, Ph.D., teaching toddlers at risk of autism very early in development can have a dramatic and lasting effect on their lives. Here are some specific points to keep in mind when teaching and playing with your toddler. **Note:** The following are abridged excerpts from Chapter 3: "12 Rules to Play By." For the full rules, see the book.

1 Start early. It is *especially* important while your child is very young to increase your child's interactions (and eye contact in particular) with adults and help the child learn to enjoy adult company. Even though some children are more capable of learning quickly or making bigger changes than others, whatever changes they can make are more likely to be brought about by intervention very early in life. Don't let professionals or other parents tell you to wait and see what happens with your child's development.

2 Use fun activities to distract a child who is too self-absorbed. Children should not be wrapped up in their own little world, engaging in repetitive movements or play; talking to themselves by repeating scripts from TV shows, songs and books; or looking at inanimate objects for extended periods of time and ignoring other people, which is often seen in toddlers at risk for autism spectrum disorder. When a child tends to remain engaged in self-absorbed activity, it can be tempting to let him do just that. This is a mistake. Take every opportunity to get the child's attention, make yourself a source of fun, and make interacting with you so enjoyable that you'll be able to compete with the interest he finds in those solitary activities.

3 Use naturally occurring interactions and routines. This allows you to begin with a routine, which the toddler already knows and finds comfortable. You can enter that activity without disrupting it and then *shape* the routine to incorporate new skills and behaviors. This can be a routine involving mealtime, bathtime, bedtime or any regular activity. The toddler can learn new skills in varied, real-life situations and is then able to better use them in even more new activities with different people. Incorporating interactive routines may provide the child with more opportunities to laugh and smile with caregivers.

4 Change routines in a funny way. Once a child has learned a routine, mix it up by doing something different and unexpected. He'll probably find that surprising and funny. This not only will help direct the child's attention to what you're doing, but may also help to develop his sense of humor.

THINKSTOCK PHOTOS

Fein became fascinated with these kids and began to study a group of them in an attempt to discover what about their histories made them different.

In her research she found that almost all of those who had been diagnosed with autism but no longer exhibited traits consistent with the disorder had received intensive behavioral intervention (more than 20 hours per week) of ABA therapy, and that they tended to be diagnosed with autism earlier than others.

In 2013 she published an influential paper on her findings in the *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. She stresses that even with intensive ABA, only a small number of children achieve what she calls an "optimal outcome," shedding the diagnosis of autism entirely.

A 2014 study conducted by other researchers found that about 10 percent of those who received intensive ABA achieved optimal outcomes. "I think if children are detected really early and get intense, appropriate intervention, that figure might go up a bit," Fein says. However, Fein adds that almost all children who receive significant ABA improve, albeit at different rates.

PHOTO BY JOSEPH BERGER

Deborah Fein, Ph.D.

One key to maximizing the impact of the ABA sessions is to start working with children as early as possible, when the brain has more capacity to learn.

BIRTH TO 3

When a human brain is young it is more impressionable, or what neuroscientists describe as "plastic." From birth to age 3, the brain forms thousands of connections per minute, and it's a critical window for learning, perhaps especially for those with autism. This unique learning window in a child's development is often wasted as parents wait for diagnoses and services. To help parents of children at risk for autism, Fein co-authored the book *The Activity Kit for Babies and Toddlers at Risk: How to Use Everyday Routines to Build Social and Communication Skills*. The book was released in December and provides parents with 100 games and activities designed to support development in children. These games are intended to help parents utilize some of the techniques used by professional ABA therapists.

"For many kids there's a delay in diagnoses, so they don't get started [with ABA] as early as they might have," Fein says. "Connecticut and Massachusetts are among the better states in terms of getting a diagnosis," but "there are many states where you have to wait. It could be up to two years for an evaluation or eligibility. A lot of kids have to wait a fairly long time, and it's very frustrating for parents."

Additionally, there are many parts of the country, and the world, where services are limited even after a diagnosis of autism.

Fein gets emails at least once a week from parents who are awaiting services or an official diagnosis and seeking guidance from her on what they can do in the interim. The book grew out of a wish to provide these parents with more assistance. "It's never going to be as good as professionally trained people, but is a lot better than nothing," Fein says.

The book's co-authors are Molly Helt, who earned her doctoral degree in psychology from UConn and is now an assistant

5 **Leave off endings.** One technique is to leave off words at the end or in the middle of something and let the child fill it in. If the child fills it in, give enthusiastic praise and repeat a few more times, each time rewarding with praise any attempt by the child.

6 **Help the child include others in play.** When playing with your young child, you want her to include you, even if it's just by looking at you. Sometimes just playing with the same toy next to your child, switching back and forth between imitating her play and demonstrating new ways to play is enough to get her to switch her attention between her play and you.

7 **Get your child's attention by using what she likes.** Using activities, foods and objects that your child likes is very important in helping you get her attention. Using the objects and activities will provide lots of chances for her to feel more attached to you, to learn skills and to spend less time in self-absorbed activities.

8 **Have theme days.** Any color can be a theme (Have a "red day" in which you both dress in all red, eats lots of red foods, etc.). Any animal can be a theme (Fish: Take a trip to an aquarium, eat goldfish crackers, read books about fish). A favorite food can be a theme (If your child likes eggs, cook and eat them in various ways, color them, hide plastic eggs for your child to find). You can create seasonal themes (flower day in the spring, leaf and pumpkin days in the fall, snow day in the winter).

9 **Teach skills at, or just above, your child's current level.** If your child has no words or gestures, teach simple signs (like "help" and "all done") or simple words or word approximations (like "baba" to request or label her bottle) as the next step.

10 **Do not encourage independence too soon.** When children are slow to learn about social interactions, we want to give them as much practice as possible. To help the child increase his enjoyment of adults, it helps if the child *needs* adults, not only for basic things like food and clothing but also for entertainment. So when possible, use toys that require an adult's help, like balloons and bubbles, or blocks for stacking and knocking down.

11 **Involve other family members.** It will benefit your child if there are other adults or an older sibling who can do some of these activities with her. This will help the child establish other close relationships and learn to carry over the feelings and skills you are encouraging.

12 **Don't forget behavioral principles.** When he doesn't participate in games with you, prompt him to do these things, not necessarily all the time, but most of the time. If you're playing a game or singing a song where you're both supposed to clap, you can gently take your child's hands and help him clap. If he is not looking at you, you can prompt attention by putting yourself right in front of him. When he does what you want, give him enthusiastic praise. Prompting and immediately rewarding the desired behavior will make it more likely to occur next time.

professor of psychology and neuroscience at Trinity College, and Lynn Brennan, a board-certified ABA consultant, along with Marianne Barton, a clinical professor in UConn's Department of Psychological Sciences and director of UConn's Psychological Services Clinic.

The games in the book are designed to be easily incorporated into parents' everyday lives. "You're going to the bank, you're doing laundry, you're cooking dinner — what can you do with the toddler during those times?" Fein says. "Here's a game you can play while you're making dinner and the goal is language and eye contact."

The games featured in the book are similar to the type of games Jake would play as a toddler with professional ABA therapists. Karen Exkorn, Jake's mother, recalls that her son's sessions would start at 9 a.m. and run all day, with breaks as various therapists arrived and left. In one exercise Exkorn recalls, "Jake would be sitting in the little chair across from the therapist. She would say, 'Jake, do this,' and clap her hands. Then she would take Jake's hands and clap his hands together and say, 'that's doing this.' That trial would be repeated over and over again, sometimes hundreds of times over the course of a week."

Exkorn says, "Our goal in his therapy was not that he would recover, it was that he would be able to speak again. We went in with very modest expectations and what happened was really beyond our wildest dreams."

Jake just completed his freshman year at the University of Michigan. His story and that of others who once were diagnosed with autism and apparently have recovered is sometimes met with a surprising reaction — skepticism.

EVIDENCE OF RECOVERY

Fein is a recognized expert in her field whose work has been praised by the national advocacy group Autism Speaks and many other autism experts. Along with Diana Robins, she developed the "Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers," the most widely used autism screening tool for toddlers.

She is outspoken in her criticism of many far-fetched autism treatment methods and theories. She dismisses the notion that autism could be linked to vaccines: "There's been a lot of studies and there is no difference in the incidence of autism between kids who get vaccinated or don't," she says. She adds that "facilitated communication," a method whereby a "trained" facilitator is supposedly able to help a person with autism or another disability communicate, is as problematic as the vaccine theory — "What's been shown over and over again is that [the person] who is communicating is the facilitator."

> "Our goal in his therapy was not that he would recover, it was that he would be able to speak again. We went in with very modest expectations and what happened was really beyond our wildest dreams."

Jake Exkorn at age 19 in his dorm at Michigan, where he is a freshman.

She is equally blunt when it comes to discussing controversy around her own work. "A lot of people — scientists, researchers, clinicians — they think once you have autism, that's it, you have autism, and that with good behavior treatment you can reduce some of the interfering behaviors and you can get the skills to move along, but you will never lose the features of autism. That's a common, long-standing belief and a lot of people said to me in one form or another that 'these kids must have never been autistic if they are not now.'"

But Fein has seen the evidence with her own eyes.

Prior to her 2013 study, an expert re-examined the case files of the study participants and independently diagnosed the children with autism (cases in which an autism diagnosis was not certain were eliminated from the study).

In addition there is some physiological evidence that those in the optimal-outcome group did indeed have autism. One recent study co-authored by Fein examined brain scans of children who had optimal outcomes and found that although their behavior had changed, their brains were still different than people who had never been diagnosed with autism. "They don't look like our typically developing control group," Fein says. "That suggested that they are learning the behavioral skills to get them off the spectrum, but they may be getting there a different way." In other words, as their brains developed and received ABA treatment they may have found ways to compensate for their autism.

The head size of those who achieve optimal outcome is also consistent with what is expected in children who have been diagnosed with autism. "There are many studies suggesting that children with autism are born with average or slightly smaller-than-average heads, which then grow more rapidly than average, leading to rather large heads, which then slow in growth and approach the average again, but still tend to be large," Fein says. "We hypothesized that the optimal-outcome children might have more typical brain growth and therefore would

not show this pattern, but they did show the same pattern. This confirms they really were autistic early on, and also suggests that however their brains are different from the usual children [with autism], it doesn't show in their growth of head circumference."

Fein is not alone in recognizing the significance of early intervention or the possibility of significant progress in youngsters who receive therapy. Connecticut's Birth to Three System is a division of the state's Office of Early Childhood and helps families meet the developmental and health-related needs of infants and toddlers, maintaining a hotline and website (800-505-7000, birth23.org). Though not overly familiar with Fein's studies, Lynn Johnson, the early intervention division director, confirms that with early intervention amazing strides are possible. "Through intervention with the family and child around communication, socialization and behavior, children make significant gains in their abilities to participate in daily activities with their family and peers," she says. "Often this can be seen as the child no longer having the diagnosis."

Johnson adds that work such as Fein's is extremely important. "Efforts to identify children with ASD [Autism Spectrum Disorder] is occurring earlier than ever before and this has increased the number of children and families being enrolled in early-intervention programs. Research on the outcomes for these children and their families later in life is essential to supporting and informing the efforts to identify and provide intervention services."

FUTURE RESEARCH

Fein intends to keep studying the optimal-outcome children who are now young adults and see how they progress throughout their lives. "Can they really transition into adulthood? Do they have romantic relationships? Do they have a best friend? Do they get married? And then of course we have no idea what happens to their kids," she says.

In addition to the ongoing study of optimal-outcome children, she hopes to test and then launch a parent-training website that can serve as a supplement or substitute to her book.

She defines successful treatment of autism as any treatment regimen that moves "kids faster toward fulfilling their own potential," while acknowledging optimal outcomes are the exception rather than the rule. Though she says birth to 3 is an important window in development, ABA therapy and the techniques she teaches in the book are still beneficial for older children: "It's never too late to learn skills."

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FATHER'S DAY
Advertisement

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Coppley suits are expertly tailored from the best fabrics from around the world. Buy a suit ready to wear or have it custom made just for you. Stackpole Moore Tryon Tuesday's, Hartford, 860-522-0181, *stackpolemooretryon.com*

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Class and refinement, personified. The Joey Cap Toe Oxford is an updated design on a classic, versatile style with a rubber outsole. Constructed out of genuine leather and featuring an eye-catching weave detailing, these oxfords pair perfectly with everything from a suit to your favorite chinos. $165. Imported, Cognac; Available at ghbass.com or outlet locations: *ghbass.com/store-locator/all-stores.do*

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Blue Q donates a portion of its proceeds from the socks to Doctors Without Borders. $10.99 pair. The Bowerbird, 860-434-3562, *thebowerbird.com*

SACK IT

The Herschel Supply Retreat Navy Fouta is a backpack with contrasting brown full-grain leather buckles and a cinch top. This pack features a laptop (15 in.) pocket and external sleeve pocket to stash small items. Dimensions: 19 in x 12 in x 6 in, 22.5 L. $79.99. Available at Trailblazer New Haven, Trailblazer Mohegan Sun and Denali Trumbull, or online at *denalioutdoor.com*

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Tacori Monterey Roadster vented cuff: Step out in style with this vintage car-inspired vented silver cuff men's bracelet. All Tacori pieces are handcrafted by artisans in California, $650. Available at Lenox Jewelers, Fairfield, 203-371-6157

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Water's Edge
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Celebrating Our 30th Anniversary

It seems like some of our best memories happened around water: Swimming Lessons in the Pool, Overnight Camp at the Lake, Vacations with Family Along the Shore. Well, Water's Edge Resort & Spa is on the water and it's where Connecticut goes to find the shore. See why Water's Edge has been welcoming back visitors and families for decades.

Upcoming Events

Fri., June 17, 2016
Center Stage Motown & More!
A Live Motown Extravaganza with Style & Flair

Sun., June 19, 2016
Father's Day Brunch
Seatings from 9:00am - 4:30pm

1525 Boston Post Road • Westbrook, CT 06498
860.399.5901 • WatersEdgeResortandSpa.com

Soak Up the FUN

BY ERIK OFGANG AND KATE HARTMAN

Looking for some cool fun on the water this summer?

We have boatloads of recommendations: The Sound, lakes, rivers, seaports, aquariums, museums, lighthouses, water parks and waterfalls

Dive in!

Silver Sands Beach, Milford. ROBERT GREGSON

Sherwood Island Beach, Westport, KINDRA KLINEFF

Sand and Surf on the Sound

Long Island Sound is perhaps the most defining feature of our state, and when the weather warms we flock to the many beaches along the coast. Here we explore some of the state's most desired beach destinations. We recognize that there are many more beaches, both private and public. Get out there and spend time on the beach you love. Any beach is a good place to be in our book!

Hammonasset Beach

Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison

This is Connecticut's largest shoreline park, with over two miles of beach to enjoy. Stroll along the wooden boardwalk that hugs the dunes or splash in the cool blue waters. This is the perfect place to go biking, walking, picnicking, fishing or to carry in your boat. With several grassy campsites, it's easy to turn your day at the beach into a weekend getaway or a week-long vacation. Park fees vary based on the season and day of the week.

Ocean Beach, New London

This 50-acre park includes a beautiful beach with crisp, blue waters that the whole family will enjoy. But there's much more to do here than just lay on the sand. Check out our water parks list on page 55 for more information on all the fun to be had here.

Rocky Neck State Park, East Lyme

This beautiful, gently sloping beach is unlike any other in the state. You must walk under the train tracks to access the beach, and once you do, soft white sands expand in both directions. This is a great place to crab or fish, train watch and picnic. You can explore a diverse trail system and observe the beautiful salt marsh from several viewing platforms.

Silver Sands State Park, Milford

This beach has something no other Connecticut beach has — buried treasure, or at least the rumor of buried treasure. Legend has it Captain Kidd hid his treasure on Charles Island in 1699, but it's never been found. That doesn't stop adventure

Silver Sands State Park, Charles Island, Milford

seekers from trekking out to the island during low tide and looking for themselves. On the mainland there's plenty of beach to spread out on and catch a few rays.

Sherwood Island State Park, Westport

Sherwood Island was Connecticut's first state park — it was purchased in 1914 — and it remains one of its finest. It covers about 234 acres of beach, wetlands and woodlands. Swim in the Sound, observe the marsh life and enjoy a leisurely lunch beneath the trees. The Sherwood Island Nature Center is open seasonally with a range of displays and exhibits for all ages. The park is also home to the state's September 11 Living Memorial, which was dedicated in 2002.

Calf Pasture Beach, Norwalk

As part of the Norwalk Harbor, Calf Pasture Beach is a great place to lay on the sand and play in the surf. Go swimming, boating, fishing from the pier and clam digging here. There are also recreation facilities for volleyball, bocce, basketball and softball, and a skate park is nearby. There are many tree-shaded picnic tables at Shady Beach, located just to the east, where you can enjoy a family gathering. Parking is free for Norwalk residents who have a pass, but there is a $25 fee on weekdays and $30 fee on weekends for other visitors.

Long Island Sound

Calf Pasture Beach, Norwalk

Thimble Islands, Branford Coast, JOHN HUETT

Rocky Neck State Park, COPPOLA PHOTOGRAPHY

The Long and Short of Sound Activities

Want to do more than just lie on the beach this summer? Here are several great activities along Long Island Sound to help you make the most of the warm weather.

Go on a **SALTWATER FISHING** expedition with **Marlintini Sportfishing Inc.** in New London. This is the perfect place to fish for striped bass, bluefish, fluke and blackfish on the waters of the Sound. *marlintini.com*

PADDLEBOARDING is all the rage these days, and you can try it for yourself with **Paddleworks CT**, which serves Clinton, Madison, Old Saybrook, Westbrook, Guilford, Branford, New Haven and Killingworth, or with **Downunder Kayaking** in Westport and Rowayton. *paddleworksct.com, downunderct.com*

Take a **SAILING** lesson with **Longshore Sailing School** in Westport or **New England Science & Sailing Foundation** in Stonington. With classes for adults and children, everyone can get out on the water. There are also kayak and paddleboard lessons available. *longshoresailingschool.com, nessf.org*

BIKING is a great way to explore the shoreline. **Connecticut Shoreline Bike & Boat Tour** in Guilford makes it easy with leisurely paced, four-hour, guided tours that include a 45-minute boat tour of the historic Thimble Islands. *ctbiketours.com*

Or skip the biking and go straight to the **BOAT TOUR** with **Thimble Islands Cruise**. Climb aboard the company's passenger boat, the *Sea Mist*, and enjoy a 45-minute narrated tour of the archipelago, which includes more than 100 islands, some of which are only visible at low tide. *thimbleislands.com*

A Day on the Lake

Relaxing on a lake is one of the undeniable joys of summer in Connecticut. Though we couldn't include every lake in the state, here are some of our favorites.

Lake Waramaug
CHRISTINE ADAMS BECKETT

Bantam Lake, STEVE MELCHER

Candlewood Lake, Multiple towns
Connecticut's largest lake at eight-plus square miles is bordered by five towns and serves as a summer playground in the Greater Danbury area. There are several spots to swim on the lake, but the best way to enjoy it is by boat. Gerard's Waters Edge in New Milford offers ski boat, pontoon boat, tube and water ski rentals.

Once you've had your fill of on-the-water activities, drop anchor at Down the Hatch in Brookfield. Accessible by car or boat (there are dozens of dock spots but they tend to fill up at peak times on the weekend) this outdoor spot offers affordable drinks, easygoing eats and one of the best views in the state.

Squantz Pond, New Fairfield Separated from Candlewood Lake by a narrow strip of Route 39, this lake may be smaller but is equally beautiful. The state park offers swimming and access to miles of spectacular hiking, including intense but enjoyable trails to Council Rock, a striking rock formation where Native Americans held historic tribal meetings, and Lookout Point, which provides unforgettable views of Squantz Pond and Candlewood Lake. The parking lot tends to fill up early on the weekend and would-be swimmers are frequently turned away, but the park is generally quiet and peaceful on weekdays.

Before heading to Squantz, grab a great deli sandwich at New Fairfield Food Market in New Fairfield's town center a few miles away.

Bantam Lake, Morris Activities at this large and beautiful lake include camping, crew, fishing, sailing, swimming, water skiing and other water sports. Many of these activities are to be found at White Memorial Foundation, which operates a campground and marina on the lake and boasts 4,000 acres of land and more outdoor activities than you can possibly fit into a day.

Quaddick Lake, Thompson

Lake Waramaug, New Preston One of the state's most beautiful bodies of water, this scenic lake can be experienced by driving or biking around it (it's an easy, scenic 8.7 miles), and by spending some time at Lake Waramaug State Park. You can also take in the beautiful views while sampling fine Connecticut wines at Hopkins Vineyard, which overlooks the lake, or dining at Hopkins Inn, which is located adjacent to the winery.

Lake McDonough, Barkhamsted Less than 30 miles from Hartford one finds the gorgeous Lake McDonough. At this scenic recreation area there are many ways to enjoy Connecticut's beauty and the summer sunshine, including swimming, fishing and boating. There is also a nature trail that is fully accessible for those with disabilities.

Quaddick State Park, Thompson Once a fishing area for the Nipmuck Indians, the cool reservoir water and the sandy beach at this classic Connecticut lake draw frequent crowds during the warm summer months. Activities at the lake include boating, field sports, fishing, picnicking and swimming.

Go With the Flow

Riverfront Recapture in Hartford is hosting a variety of fun riverside events and activities this summer. Here are just a few of our favorites!

Dancing by the River

Great River Park, East Hartford
June 4, July 16 & Sept. 17

Three events throughout the summer let you dance along the banks of the Connecticut River. Enjoy the high-energy fun of swing dancing on June 4, the refined serenity of ballroom dancing with a live band on July 16 and Simply Swing's salute to Natalie and Nat "King" Cole, called *Unforgettable,* on the Mortensen Riverfront Plaza on Sept. 17.

Riverfest

Mortensen Riverfront Plaza, Hartford
July 9, 4 to 10 p.m.

The City of Hartford invites you to help celebrate Independence Day by gathering along the banks of the Connecticut River for Riverfest on July 9, a day filled with live music, amusement rides and activities for children. The event is complemented by the Riverfest Food Truck Festival on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The night will be capped with a fireworks display by Atlas Pyrovision.

Dragon Boat & Asian Festival

Mortensen Riverfront Plaza, Hartford
Aug. 20, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Dragon boats will cut through the water at the 16th annual Dragon Boat & Asian Festival this summer. On land, authentic Asian music, dance performances and a martial arts expo will delight. There will be arts and crafts for the kids, and you can quench your thirst at the Asian beer garden.

Down Under Kayaking

Clarke Outdoors, KINDRA CLINEFF

Down by the River

Sometimes all you want to do is relax on the beach. But what if you're feeling more adventurous? There are plenty of fun activities to try on Connecticut's rivers, like kayaking, canoeing and paddleboarding. With many businesses providing rentals and instruction, every paddler, regardless of experience, has the opportunity to get out on the water.

Clarke Outdoors, West Cornwall

860-672-6365, clarkeoutdoors.com

Located in the Northwest Corner, not far from the famous West Cornwall Covered Bridge, Clarke Outdoors is a great resource to rent canoes, kayaks and rafts. This stunning section of the Housatonic River includes a mixture of moving flat water and easy whitewater that makes it ideal for novice paddlers. Opt for a 6- or 10-mile ride down the river. The famous covered bridge marks the halfway point of the journey where you can stop off and grab a bite to eat at the Wandering Moose Café (reservations are recommended). Or bring a picnic lunch and dine by the river. Clarke Outdoors suggests all visitors bring a change of clothes, a towel, suntan lotion and, of course, a waterproof camera to capture the memories. The cost of rentals varies based on equipment and whether you're stopping by during the week or on the weekend.

Main Stream Canoe and Kayak, New Hartford

860-693-6791, mainstreamcanoe.com

Since 1975, Main Stream Canoe and Kayak has introduced people to water sports and made them affordable for everyone. From its ideal location on the banks of the Farmington River in New Hartford, the business rents canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards, and provides instruction. Also known for buying, selling and repairing equipment, it's a great place to pick up a new or used kayak or canoe. Main Stream Canoe offers several different river and lake trips that are ideal for different levels of experience. You can also canoe under the stars on a Moonlight Canoe Trip, which departs from the Chart House Restaurant in Simsbury at 7 p.m.

Collinsville Canoe & Kayak, New Hartford
860-693-6977, cckstore.com

Situated next to the Farmington River in quaint Collinsville, this shop is the perfect place to rent canoes or kayaks for a relaxing flat-water ride. Daytime and moonlight-guided trips are offered to destinations like the Bantam River and Winchester Lake. The business also specializes in stand-up paddleboards (SUP). They offer beginner lessons to get familiar with the equipment, establish balance and develop an efficient paddling technique. Once you've mastered that, try SUP Yoga! Yes, yoga on a paddleboard. The extra balance that's required on the water will reinvigorate your yoga practice. Offered during the day or under the stars, this is unlike any yoga experience you've had!

Farmington River Tubing, New Hartford
860-693-6465, farmingtonrivertubing.com

Grab a group of friends and head to Farmington River Tubing for the must-try summer experience of tubing on the Satan's Kingdom stretch of the Farmington River in New Hartford. This 2½-mile ride includes three sets of rapids guaranteed to give you a little white-water excitement. It is suggested that you wear a bathing suit, shorts or anything you are comfortable swimming in — because you will likely get wet — and something on your feet, like water shoes. Life jackets are provided and there are some rules and restrictions to ensure everyone's safety. A shuttle will be there to meet you at the end to take you back to the Satan's Kingdom State Recreation Area.

Huck Finn Adventures, Avon
860-693-0385, huckfinnadventures.com

For more than 30 years, Huck Finn Adventures has rented canoes and kayaks on the Farmington River, launching in Avon and Simsbury. Renters can choose a three-, five- or nine-mile journey down the river, which corresponds to a one-, two- or three-hour adventure. This section of the river features slow-moving and shallow waters with close shores, making it perfect for novice paddlers of all ages. The company's large, stable canoes are great for large groups or families. Pull your boat up on shore to enjoy a picnic, jump off rope swings, go for a swim or enjoy the wildlife. Tip: Huck Finn Adventures takes cash or checks only, so stop by an ATM on your way.

Downunder Kayaking, Westport & Rowayton
203-642-3660, downunderct.com

This full-service kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding business has two surf shops where you can buy or rent equipment, receive instruction, partake in fitness programs and go on guided outings. The owner, Kim Hawkins, was raised Down Under in New Zealand and has brought her laid-back, relaxed vibe to Connecticut. This is the place to try something new, test your abilities and feel good about yourself. The business also offers a variety of events throughout the summer, including clambakes, moonlit tours and SUP yoga. The Westport location is in Saugatuck Center along the river, an area packed with great restaurants and stores like The Whelk, Saugatuck Sweets and a craft butchery.

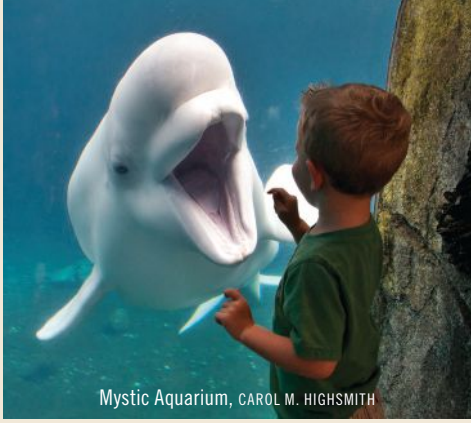
Housatonic River, ROMANIA LEE

Mystic Seaport

Maritime Aquarium

Maritime Heritage

Connecticut's shoreline and rivers are rich with history and fascinating ecology. From one-of-a-kind, historic wooden ships to the world's first nuclear submarine to rare animals, the state is home to some of the most spectacular and historic water-based attractions anywhere on the globe. Below we've highlighted some of our favorite maritime attractions.



Mystic Aquarium, CAROL M. HIGHSMITH

Mystic Seaport

860-572-0711, mysticseaport.org

The nation's leading maritime museum was founded in 1929 and is home to four National Historic Landmark vessels, including the *Charles W. Morgan*, the last wooden whaleship in the world. In addition, Mystic Seaport features a working preservation shipyard, a re-created 19th-century seafaring village and a variety of fascinating exhibits. Visitors can also get out on the water and explore the historic Mystic River until mid-October.

After your nautical adventures are finished, head to the nearby Engine Room to enjoy American comfort food at an upscale bar with craft beer and cocktails.

Mystic Aquarium

860-572-5955, mysticaquarium.org

Before leaving Mystic, aquatic animal lovers will want to stop in at the Mystic Aquarium. Founded in 1973 to serve as a living laboratory and major public exhibit, today this aquarium allows guests to visit with thousands of creatures, including New England's only beluga whales, as well as endangered African penguins. There are also rescued seals, colorful fish, sea lions and more. Some of these animals perform at the aquarium's marine theater.

Connecticut River Museum, Essex Village, JODY DOLE

Mystic Whaler, Mystic

Submarine Force Museum, Groton

800-343-0079, ussnautilus.org

Dive into history at the Navy's official submarine museum. Visitors can board the *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, and get an immersion in Cold War politics and revolutionary naval tactics. The front of the vessel, where the nuclear reactor was housed, remains classified and is off limits to visitors. (See our feature on the Nautilus and the Naval Submarine Base in Groton on page 59.) In addition to the *Nautilus*, the museum takes guests through the development of submarines, from David Bushnell's *Turtle*, constructed in 1776, to the Navy's modern subs. There are working periscopes, mini-subs, a 71-seat theater, gift shop and a picnic area on the water.

Connecticut River Museum

860-767-8269, ctrivermuseum.org

Dedicated to New England's great river, this museum affords guests the opportunity to take an "art walk" and trace the river's 410-mile course from northern New Hampshire to Long Island Sound. Guests can also climb aboard a replica of the *Turtle*, the world's first submarine used during the American Revolution; learn about the 1814 British raid on Essex; follow the historic evolution of steamboats and wooden ships; and even explore the river by sail by booking an afternoon or sunset cruise on the schooner *Mary E*, from June through October.

Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk

203-852-0700, maritimeaquarium.org

Dedicated to creatures indigenous to Long Island Sound, this aquarium is home to seals, lobsters, jellyfish, otters, sea turtles and a giant shark tank filled with — you guessed it — sharks. The aquarium also boasts Connecticut's largest IMAX theater (it's six stories tall) which shows a variety of educational material as well as blockbusters like *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

The aquarium is located in the heart of Norwalk's vibrant South Norwalk neighborhood, which is home to some of Connecticut's most beloved restaurants. Stop in at the recently opened Mecha Noodle Bar for pho or ramen noodles or visit Cask Republic and enjoy one of Connecticut's best beer bars.

Sail Away

Lovers of all things nautical can leave the land behind them by booking passage on one of several educational and historical cruises. The New London-based *Mystic Whaler* is a re-creation of a New England schooner offering one-, two-, three- and five-day sailing adventures and evening, lobster-dinner cruises (mystic-whalercruises.com). In Stamford, *SoundWaters*, a replica of a 19th-century schooner, offers sunset sails and private charters and is dedicated to protecting Long Island Sound through education (soundwaters.org). The Mystic Seaport-operated *Brilliant* is a famed schooner that offers educational sails in warm seasons and has been described by *WoodenBoat* magazine as one of the 100 most beautiful classic boats in existence (*mysticseaport.org*).

Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven
ROMANIA LEE

Sheffield Island Lighthouse, Norwalk

Guiding Lights

If you're looking for the perfect activity to pair with your maritime adventures in Connecticut, look no further than these lighthouses of the state's waterways.

Ledge Lighthouse, New London The beautiful structure in the middle of the Thames River has guided vessels ranging from wooden schooners to high-tech submarines. Guests can take a tour to explore the inner workings of this solitary outpost.

Sheffield Island Lighthouse, Norwalk Built in 1868, the lighthouse provides a unique venue which strives to increase awareness, appreciation and consideration for the environment. To get to the island, guests take a 45-minute boat ride from South Norwalk aboard the seaport's ferry down the Norwalk River to the entrance of the harbor. Tour the 2½-story, 10-room lighthouse or venture down the nature trail into the Stewart B. McKinney Wildlife Refuge.

Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven An 82-acre park on Long Island Sound that offers swimming, natural-history displays, a splash-pad water play area, nature trails, a picnic grove, a bird sanctuary and an antique carousel, all in the shadow of a lighthouse.

Old Lighthouse Museum, Stonington Perhaps Stonington's best-known landmark, this 1840 lighthouse keeps watch at the south end of Stonington Point. The building became the first museum lighthouse in the nation after the Stonington Historical Society bought it from the federal government in 1925. In addition to viewing exhibits on local history, visitors who climb the lighthouse's 29 stone steps are rewarded with a sea-enhanced view of three states.

New London Ledge Light, Groton

Old Lighthouse Museum, Stonington
KINDRA CLINEFF

Wet and Wild Water Parks

Searching for a place to beat the heat and have a little fun this summer? Look no further than Connecticut's water parks, which bring together the best rides and slides for all ages, plus wave pools and other water-logged adventures.

Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park, Portland

Lake Compounce, Bristol

Quassy Amusement Park, Middlebury

203-758-2913, quassy.com

Quassy has been offering up quality, affordable family fun for more than 100 years. The Splash Away Bay Water Park helps everyone cool off with its Saturation Station — an interactive play unit that features cascading fountains, water cannons, two slides and a huge bucket that dumps more than 300 gallons of water onto guests below. The gigantic, dueling waterslides of the Tunnel Twisters let riders race for glory. There are plenty of activities to keep the little ones happy, too, including five waterslides — all new this year — geared toward smaller children. If relaxation is what you seek, head over to Quassy Beach on the edge of Lake Quassapaug. When your fingers start to prune, check out Quassy's many rides on the land like the Wooden Warrior, which was rated among the top 25 wooden roller coasters in the world in a 2012 poll of coaster and theme park experts, and the Frantic, which flips riders in the air while they're strapped to a giant pendulum.

Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park, Portland

866-860-0208, brownstonepark.com

Climb, swim, jump and board your way to summer fun at this one-of-a-kind adventure park on two large, freshwater quarries in Portland. Pack a ton of activities into one day — go rock climbing, swimming, kayaking, snorkeling, cliff jumping or zip lining. Get out on the water and try the overhead wakeboarding cable system, which is great for all riders. Beginners can typically get up on their first try. Jump into the water on a good, old-fashioned rope swing, and test your strength and endurance on the park's obstacle course. Scuba diving is offered for all levels at the quarry, which reaches depths of 85 feet. The park offers plenty of water-training courses throughout the season so visitors can learn the basics of a new sport and build confidence. Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park is a great place to host parties, group outings and school field trips.

Lake Compounce, Bristol

860-583-3300, lakecompounce.com

With more than 50 thrilling rides and attractions, Lake Compounce in Bristol is a great destination for the whole family. It is the oldest continuously operated amusement park in the nation and also home to the state's largest water park, Crocodile Cove. Float down the Croc-O-Nile, bob in the Bayou Bay and raft down Mammoth Falls. Fire water cannons, slip down slides and get dumped on by a 300-gallon bucket in Clipper Cove. Riptide Racer, an epic competitive water slide, pits up to four riders against each other in a twisting, scream-inducing race to the finish. When you're done, there's no better way to dry off than hopping on one of Lake Compounce's high-flying roller coasters like Phobia Phear Coaster, which is new in 2016! Phobia is the first ride of its kind in New England, rocketing up to 15 stories high, forward and backward, at speeds of up to 65 mph with cobra-roll inversion in the middle — so named because the ride's loop resembles a cobra's head. Also don't miss the lifelike dinosaurs and fossil digs at the Dino Expedition. It's perfect for all ages.

Ocean Beach Park, New London

Ocean Beach Park, New London

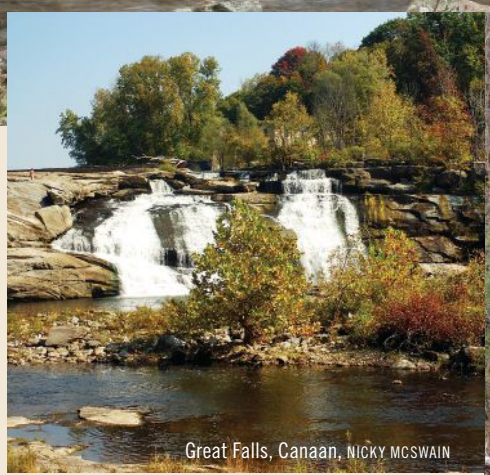
860-447-3031, ocean-beach-park.com

Voted one of New England's best beaches by National Geographic, Ocean Beach Park in New London boasts a beautiful sugar-sand beach to relax on and glittering waters to splash in. But the beach is just one small piece of the fun to be had on this 50-acre facility. The 50-meter, Olympic-size pool is perfect for swimming laps, and there's a waterslide for more excitement. The spray park is a great place for smaller visitors to get wet. Restored classic carnival rides like a carousel, The Scrambler, The Octopus and The Bullet will bring every visitor back to childhood. An indoor arcade has plenty of prizes to win, and the outdoor 18-hole miniature golf course is a great way to end the day. On Monday nights, take advantage of deals on kiddie rides and rounds of golf.

Chasing Waterfalls

Lakes, rivers and Long Island Sound may be the most obvious choices when it comes to water-related summer activities. But for lovers of nature, it is hard to beat a hike ending with the view of a cascading waterfall. Here are some of the best-known falls in the state.

Kent Falls, Kent, NEWENGLANDWATERFALLS.COM



Great Falls, Canaan, NICKY MCSWAIN

Roaring Brook Falls, Cheshire, ALYSON BOWMAN

Dean's Ravine, Canaan

Kent Falls

One of Connecticut's most beloved natural attractions, Kent Falls is a beautiful winding waterfall that drops down in stages that amount to 250 feet, over a quarter-mile stretch. The waterfall is located within Kent Falls State Park and features a grassy area with picnic tables. There is a steep but paved path that runs up the side of the waterfall and provides a great walk, which most kids or adults in average shape can easily manage. It is not far from downtown Kent, which is home to a variety of bookstores, shops and galleries. Prior to heading to the falls you can grab an excellent sandwich at the Panini Cafe.

Great Falls, Canaan

This waterfall along the Housatonic River is so mighty the surrounding village (Great Falls) was named after it. The 60-foot fall carries one of the highest volumes in the state and is truly awe-inspiring when flowing. However, according to *ctwaterfalls.com*, for most of the year much of the falls' volume is diverted upstream by a hydroelectric plant, only roaring at its full power during springtime floods or a dam release.

Dean's Ravine, Canaan

Canaan is also home to Dean's Ravine. This fall was once part of the 2,180-mile-long Appalachian Trail (AP), but in the 1980s the AP was rerouted west of the Housatonic River. Now the trail passing through Dean's Ravine is part of a 26-mile half-loop off the main AP trail. Park at the intersection of Music Mountain and Cream Hill roads and enjoy a short walk to the ravine.

Roaring Brook Falls, Cheshire

Located on land owned and maintained by the Cheshire Land Trust, this waterfall boasts an eye-catching, 80-foot drop, and like all the waterfalls on this list, is particularly impressive after a heavy rain. Follow the trail to the falls, and if you're up for more hiking, take the Blue-Blazed Quinnipiac Trail that runs along Prospect Ridge from the Cheshire and Prospect town line to the Naugatuck State Forest and Hamden's Sleeping Giant State Park.

Wadsworth Falls, Middletown

Formed by a more-than-10-foot drop on the Coginchaug River, these falls can be viewed via a 1½-mile leisurely hike (or guests can park nearby). Named for Clarence C. Wadsworth, a noted scholar and linguist who fought to preserve the falls and its surrounding area, the park is steeped in history. According to the state, "the sluiceway of a textile mill remains by Wadsworth Falls in the southwest corner of the park. Nearby, one of the first pistol factories in Connecticut was operated during the 1800s by Simeon North, developer of the interchangeable parts system for firearms used in the Civil War. Gunpowder was made at the factory established by Jehosophat Starr at Powder Mill Pond in 1794, until the business literally blew up in 1892."

ALSO CHECK OUT

Here we highlight a few hidden-gem waterfalls within and just beyond the state line that may be harder to find and/or require more of a trek to enjoy.

Buttermilk Falls, Plymouth This eye-catching series of falls can be found within a nature conservatory on Lane Hill Road. Follow the blue-marked Mattatuck Trail to this waterfall, which is 59 feet high, according to *ctwaterfalls.com*.

Enders Falls, Granby Beloved by waterfall enthusiasts, this collection of multiple waterfalls along a quarter-mile stretch of river is consistently ranked as one of the most beautiful in the state. Find these falls on Route 219 West in Granby within Enders State Forest.

Campbell Falls, Norfolk/New Marlborough, Massachusetts The falls themselves are not in Connecticut, but are found within the Campbell Falls State Park Reserve, which is a Connecticut state park that crosses into Massachusetts. State lines aside, this waterfall is a favorite of Connecticut hikers. Follow Route 272 north from Norfolk Center. Take a left onto Old Spaulding Road and the park is on the right.

Beyond the Border Speaking of crossing state lines, Connecticut is close to some pretty spectacular falls. Bash Bish Falls is found in Mount Washington, Massachusetts, on the border, and is one of the most spectacular single-drop falls in the region. A bit farther afield you can find the beautiful oasis waterfall that is Awosting Falls, within Minnewaska State Park Preserve outside of New Paltz, New York, about an hour from Danbury. You can also view the awe-inspiring, cascading waterfall effect of the New Croton Dam in Croton-on-Hudson, New York. Though man-made, the dam has an eye-catching spillway that is so dramatic it invokes memories of Niagara Falls, albeit on a smaller scale.

Wadsworth Falls State Park, Middletown, NEWENGLANDWATERFALLS.COM

Great Falls, Canaan, ROMANIA LEE

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'NAUTILUS 90 NORTH'

In 1958, in response to the launch of Sputnik, President Eisenhower ordered a Connecticut submarine crew on a top-secret mission where no one had gone before.

PHOTOS COURTESY U.S. NAVY
USS NAUTILUS (SSN 571) making a tight, full-speed turn while on sea trials.

Left: Dr. Waldo Lyon and Captain William Anderson monitor ice-detection equipment.

Below: The *Nautilus* slips into the Thames River in Groton on Jan. 21, 1954.

The man from Mystic called himself Charles A. Henderson, but that was not his real name. In the summer of 1958, carrying false identification papers, the man, whose real name was William Anderson, boarded a commercial flight in Seattle bound for Alaska. He was traveling with Dr. Waldo Lyon, chief scientist for the U.S. Navy's Arctic Submarine Laboratory, a San Diego-based research facility. Dr. Lyon used his real name, as it was not unusual for him to be traveling in this region and would not be cause for suspicion.

On direct orders from President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the two men were headed for the ice-filled waters of the Arctic. The duo served as a final scouting party for Operation Sunshine, a top-secret mission that would soon capture the hearts and minds of the world, change naval tactics forever and emerge as a high point in the illustrious history of the New London Naval Submarine Base in Groton, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this June.

From Seattle the men traveled to the tiny Alaskan village of Kotzebue. There they chartered a single-engine plane and were flown over the Bering Strait, the 60-mile passageway between the Russian mainland in Asia and Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska, the westernmost point in the Americas.

They had traveled all this way to study the ice — ice Anderson hoped to conquer in a way no explorer ever had, not from above but from below. For generations the North Pole had been a siren's call for adventurers. Most had been sent back unsuccessful, defeated by the shifting and unpredictable nature of the ice and confounded by the harsh, almost alien conditions of the region. In 1879, Navy Lt. Commander George W. DeLong led an attempted voyage north that ended in tragedy after his ship was trapped in ice and many crew members, including DeLong, died. In 1908, Frederick Cook claimed to have reached the pole, but his claim is widely disputed. A year later, Robert Peary also claimed to be the first person to reach the pole, but some also doubt he ever made it. After World War II, the Soviet Union flew a plane there and landed on the ice, but in the whole of human history, no water vessel had ever made it there and back, and none had

even dared claim the accomplishment.

Anderson hoped to avoid the fate of some of the less fortunate members of this explorers' fraternity. He watched the icy waters beneath him intently as the plane flew over a desolate stretch of the globe, its engine occasionally hiccuping. The plane moved beyond the Bering Strait and above the Chukchi Sea. As they went, Anderson and Lyon noted places in the ice floe where patches had collided, driving up sharp and jagged obstructions. They knew these spikes likely extended downward into the depths of the cold water where they could potentially wreak havoc on a submarine and its crew. It was a danger Anderson knew only too well.

COLLISION UNDER THE ICE

The previous year, in the late summer of 1957, the *Nautilus* submarine ventured under the Arctic ice from the Atlantic Ocean. Shortly afterward something went wrong.

The *Nautilus* was the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, built by General Dynamics Electric Boat at its plant in Groton. It was launched from the Naval Submarine Base, also in Groton, in 1954. Named for the fabled ship in Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea,* it was in many ways Verne's fantastic vision come to life. Light years ahead of anything else in the ocean, the *Nautilus* — with a hull designation of SSN 571 (Submersible Ship, Nuclear; the 571st submarine built by the U.S. Navy) — was powered by a nuclear reactor and shattered existing speed and dive records as soon as it launched.

The diesel-powered submarines that preceded the *Nautilus* were "effectively surface ships that would dive occasionally," says Reginald Preston, director of the Submarine Force Museum in Groton, where today the *Nautilus* is docked and open to visitors. Preston adds, "on a slow mission conventional submarines could stay submerged for most of a day," but if "they were doing high-speed operations [the maximum submerged time] was a matter of hours and even minutes."

Since the *Nautilus* was ultimately capable of making its own water and oxygen and its nuclear core could run for years, the ship could stay submerged almost indefinitely, the duration of a dive limited only by the amount of food that could be stored on board. And in the submarine world it was as roomy and luxurious as a suite at a Ritz-Carlton.

"Compared to diesel boats, it had all the creature comforts," says Bill Engdall, of Waterford, a *Nautilus* plankowner (original crew member). "On the *Nautilus* they could make all the water we wanted. We had washing machines and dryers on the boat."

Seawater would be boiled into freshwater through a distillation process. This process was not unique to *Nautilus*, but because of the ship's increased energy it could create far more freshwater than a conventional submarine. Oxygen was created by using the ship's evaporator to turn seawater into pure water. Once the water was purified, electricity was used to split the water molecules' hydrogen and oxygen atoms apart. The hydrogen was discharged overboard and the oxygen could be released or stored in onboard banks.

On conventional submarines, crewmembers

showered once a week if they were lucky and shared bunks — one crewmember would sleep as the other was on duty. On the *Nautilus*, crew members showered daily and each had his own bunk. There was a fairly sizable mess hall that doubled as a movie theater where popular films were projected.

Anderson, who had assumed command earlier in the summer of 1957, hoped to take the extraordinary vessel on a mission worthy of a film of its own. He wanted to go under the Arctic ice and travel from the Pacific to the Atlantic by means of the North Pole. Just a few months after being given command of the vessel, he was granted half his wish when the vessel was ordered on a short exploratory mission under the Arctic ice.

Some said even this relatively unambitious journey was too dangerous. Admiral Hyman Rickover, who had designed the *Nautilus*, told Anderson that he was going to "take that ship up there and get into trouble," wrecking the nuclear submarine program in the process.

"Father of the Nuclear Navy" Admiral Hyman Rickover.
COURTESY OF U.S. NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER

But Anderson was determined to go forward with the mission. When he took the vessel under the ice, he was at first awed. "Essentially, we were entering an unexplored cave 2,000 miles deep. There were no profiles to go by, no maps of either the ice overhead or the ocean floor below," he recalled in his book *The Ice Diaries: The True Story of One of Mankind's Greatest Adventures*. "Every foot we charted was an added foot's worth of knowledge about this last frontier."

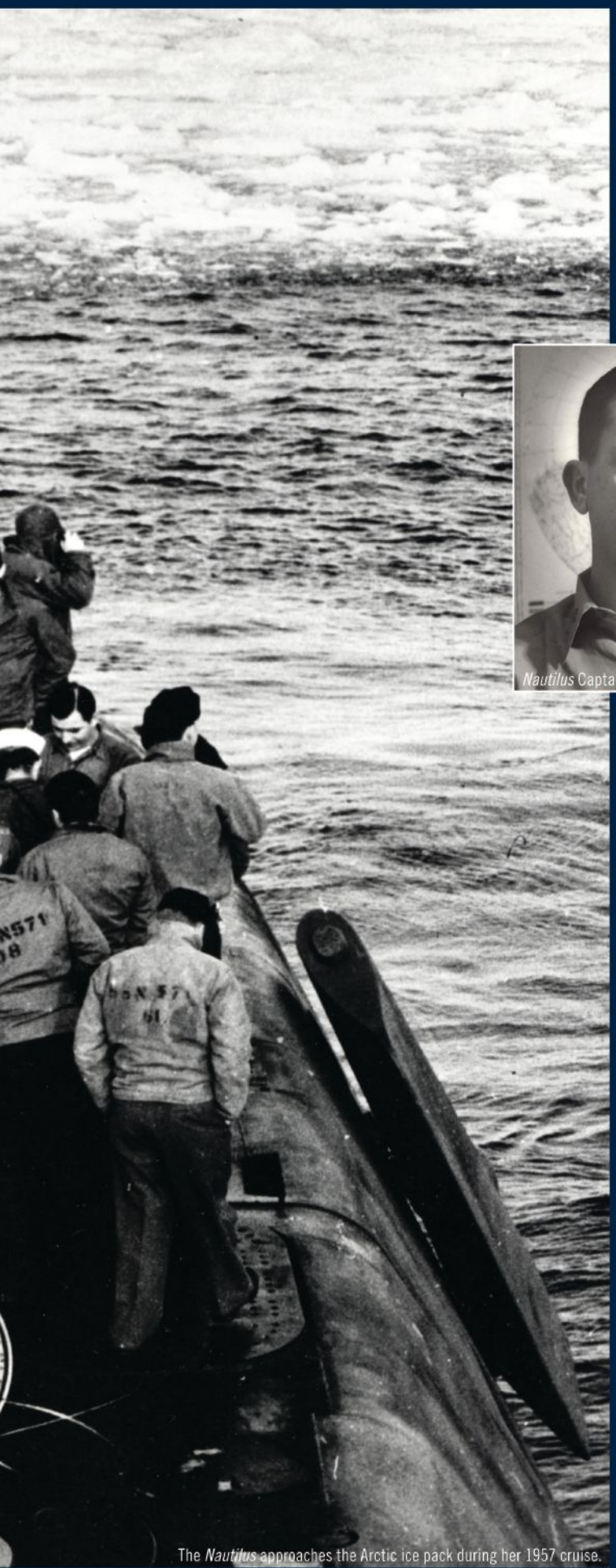
However, he would quickly learn Rickover's concerns were not unfounded. "The Arctic has a long habit of dealing out stern initiation to those who would conquer. Our magnificent *Nautilus* did not get a free pass," Anderson wrote.

Magnetic compasses do not work when they get close to the North Pole, and gyrocompasses, which use the Earth's spin to find true north, malfunction as well, as the rate of the Earth's spin changes closer to the poles. But these navigational issues were not the only problems the crew encountered.

As the ship moved northward Anderson decided to surface into what the ship's instrumentation told him was a clear opening in the ice above. Anderson requested a rate of ascent of 3 inches per second, but as the vessel started moving to the surface he could tell they were coming up much faster, at a rate of about four times what he had ordered because of the effect of the frigid waters.

At a distance of 4 feet Anderson saw through the periscope that the instrument readings were wrong and there was solid ice above them. He frantically ordered the ascent to be stopped, but it was too late. A moment later Anderson felt the ship "shudder sickeningly."

John Yuill, who was 19 at the time and the youngest crewmember, remembers feeling the thud and knowing "something was happening." Yuill, who lives in Cumberland, Rhode Island, and has three children who live in Connecticut, recalls the tension in the ship as crew members realized there had been a collision. In that



The *Nautilus* approaches the Arctic ice pack during her 1957 cruise.

moment the crew turned its attention toward Anderson, the man who had taken them to the edge of the known world, and who had just taken command of their vessel.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE COMMANDER

A native of Tennessee, Anderson graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1942, then volunteered for submarine duty (submarine service was and remains volunteer-only) and was assigned to submarine school in Groton. He later served on many combat missions in World War II in the Pacific. In 1955 he was named head of the tactical department of the submarine school in Groton. He made his home with his wife and children in the nearby Mystic section of town.

Nautilus Captain William Anderson

The son of a lumber seller, with a rural upbringing, Anderson was humble and hardworking, soft-spoken and quiet. He led by example more than through words, earning the respect of those who served with him.

Yuill says Anderson was the second-most influential man in his life, behind only his father. "He was just a remarkable human being, the kind of a guy you would follow anywhere."

In 1971, after Anderson had retired from the Navy and was serving as a congressman, he admonished FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover for accusing two prominent opponents of the Vietnam War of a terrorist plot. Anderson, himself a longtime supporter of the war, took issue with Hoover's handling of dissenters and called his actions the "climax" of "an outrageous pattern of fear and repression."

While working at the submarine school, Anderson learned that Admiral Rickover wanted to interview him. Anderson suspected, correctly it turned out, that he was being considered for the job of *Nautilus* commander, the most coveted submarine command at the time.

Known as the "Father of the Nuclear Navy," in some ways Rickover had willed the *Nautilus* into existence and would lead the Navy's nuclear program for decades. A maverick in the true sense of the word, he railed against Navy bureaucracy, cut through red tape with a vengeance and went to great, sometimes bizarre lengths to surround himself with quick-witted people. According to one story Anderson heard, when Rickover took a potential new hire out to lunch and the man put salt on his meal before tasting it, Rickover promptly ended the interview. "I will not have you in my group!" Rickover said. "You did not properly assess the situation before you took corrective action."

When Anderson traveled from Connecticut to Washington and sat down in Rickover's office, he was quickly asked a question he had not expected. Rickover wanted him to name all the books he had read in the past two years, tell him the names of the authors and give him a one-sentence summary. Anderson was a voracious reader, but intimidated by the oddness of the question, he froze and was unable to recount a single book. After he sat there for a few moments, Rickover uttered a single word: "Goodbye."

NAUTILUS

CONNECTICUT'S SUBMARINE CENTURY

A Look Back at the State's Connection to the Vessels of the Deep

In the Revolutionary War, Yale student David Bushnell designed the first submarine used in combat. It was called the *Turtle* and was a one-person, hand-cranked craft that could stay underwater for about 30 minutes, and was built in Old Saybrook. Beginning in 1776 Bushnell helped coordinate several attempts to use the craft to attach mines to British boats moored in New York Harbor and on the Hudson River.

Though the sabotage tries failed, it proved the first instance of what became a lasting connection between the state and the underwater world of submarines. This connection was solidified on June 21, 1916, 100 years ago this month, when an existing Navy Yard in Groton was redesignated as the nation's first permanent, continental submarine base. In the 100 years since, the base and consequently Connecticut have been at the heart of the submarine world.

USS Missouri in the Thames River in 2013.

To celebrate this centennial, Gov. Dannel P. Malloy designated October 2015 (100 years after the first submarines arrived in Groton) through October 2016 as Connecticut's Submarine Century, a yearlong celebration of Connecticut's *deep* connection to submarines. As part of the celebration, there will be a series of events around the sub base's centennial in June, including a concert by the United States Coast Guard Band on June 22 at 7 p.m. at the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus in Groton. (For a complete listing of events, go to ctsubmarinecentury.com.)

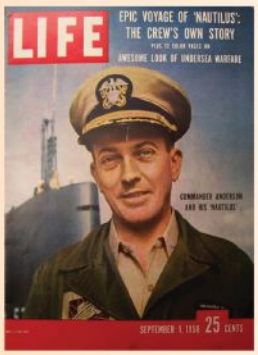
Throughout its history the base has been home to the Naval Submarine School, which the vast majority of those who serve on submarines attend. "Any and all submariners in Navy history have gone to school here — everyone from Chester Nimitz to Jimmy Carter," says Mark Jones, who works in public affairs at the base.

It was at the base in 1954 that the *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear submarine, was launched. And the base was, and continues to be, the starting point of many significant submarine voyages. In March the *USS Hartford* engaged in dramatic surfacing exercises and research at the North Pole, before returning to Connecticut.

Occupying a stretch of land along the Groton waterfront with parts crossing into Ledyard, the base has the feel of a city unto itself. It is the homeport of 15 attack submarines, and more than 6,500 active duty and reserve sailors, 2,300 civilian employees and contractors, and their families. From 1930 until 1992 the Submarine Escape Training Tank, known as the "Dive Tower," was a prominent feature of the local landscape and a spot where generations of submariners practiced escaping from sunken submarines by ascending a 100-foot column of water. Today, that tower has been replaced by a less-striking, but equally effective, submarine escape trainer, where young sailors continue to prepare for a worst-case scenario.

It is a source of local pride in the Greater Groton area, which proudly bills itself as "The Submarine Capital of the World." The base's commanding officer, Capt. Paul Whitescarver, says this community pride has been one of the unique aspects of the base during its 100-year history. "I think we've had that local sentiment and that local connection the whole time," he says, noting the great relationship the base has with the state.

The base's official name is Naval Submarine Base New London, even though it is physically located in Groton across the river from New London. The reasons for this peculiarity are that when the state first donated land for the Navy base in the 1800s, New London citizens were active in raising funds for that land. Also, when the base was established, its first commander stayed at a New London hotel, sending and receiving all correspondence from and in New London. Chris Zendan, the base's public affairs officer, says they always joke that there's a third reason for the confusing name and location: "stealth," something submarines have been all about since Bushnell's *Turtle*.



100 YEARS (PLUS) OF SUBMARINES IN CONNECTICUT

NAUTILUS 571

June 21 marks the 100th anniversary of the nation's oldest submarine base in Groton. Here's a look at some highlights of submarine history in the state.

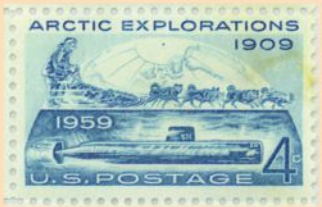
1776 Connecticut is behind the world's first submarine attack during the Revolutionary War. The submarine used is called the *Turtle* and is designed by David Bushnell and built in Old Saybrook with the support of Connecticut Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, who recommended it to George Washington. The one-person, hand-cranked craft, which could stay underwater for about 30 minutes, was used in a number of failed attempts to affix explosives to British ships in New York Harbor and on the Hudson River.

1867 Following up on a provision attached to the Naval Appropriations Act of 1867 by a Connecticut congressman, the state of Connecticut donates land along the Thames River to the Navy for the establishment of a base. Though the land is in Groton, New London donates $75,000 to purchase the land to be donated.

1868 The gifted land becomes a Navy Yard. Its first commander, Timothy A. Hunt, lives in New Haven and uses the Central Hotel on State Street in New London when in town to handle yard matters. This and New London's $75,000 donation forever associates the base with New London.

1898-1900 Because the Navy has little need for the yard, it is closed for two years and its personnel reassigned.

1912 The base is saved from permanent closure by an impassioned plea from local Congressman Edwin W. Higgins of Norwich, who was worried about the loss of federal spending in the region.



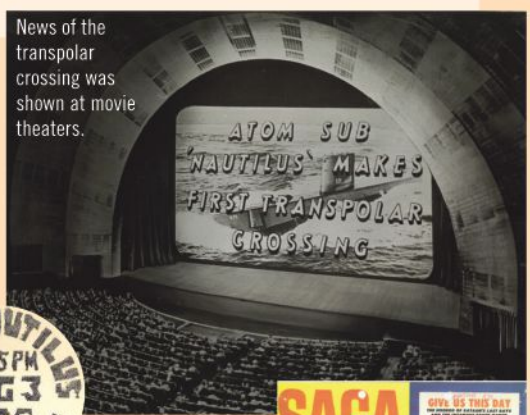
1959 Arctic Explorations stamp.

1912-1916 By this time, coincidentally, the Lake Torpedo Boat Co. in Bridgeport and the Electric Boat Co. in Groton are the foremost submarine manufacturers of the day. So the base becomes an ideal homeport for submarines.

1915 The first submarines arrive at the yard.

1916 The yard is redesignated as the nation's first permanent, continental submarine base. It also becomes home to the Naval Submarine School, where the vast majority of those who serve on submarines are trained before being deployed. Despite the base's location in Groton, it becomes known as Naval Submarine Base New London.

1918 By the end of World War I, 81 buildings are built and the base is home to 1,400 men and 20 submarines.



News of the transpolar crossing was shown at movie theaters.

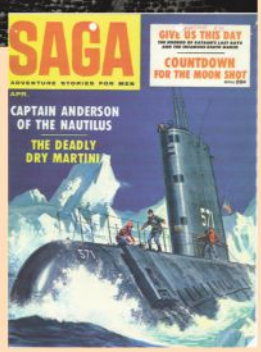
WORLD WAR II The second-largest expansion of the base occurs, as it grows from 112 acres to 497 acres. The base accommodates thousands of men to service the growing combat fleet.

1930 The Submarine Escape Training Tank is one of several new additions to the base made through federal employment programs during the Great Depression. Known as the "Dive Tower," the tank becomes and will remain a prominent feature of the local landscape until 1992. Generations of submariners practice escaping from sunken submarines in the dive tower by ascending in a 100-foot column of water.

Nautilus postmark applied to commemorative cachets and letters written on board the submarine at the North Pole.

1954 The *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear submarine, is commissioned and homeported at the base. It goes on to shatter submarine speed and dive records.

1958 The *Nautilus* sails from the Pacific to the Atlantic under the Arctic ice, becoming the first vessel to reach the North Pole in the process.



2005 The Pentagon recommends that the base be closed, causing dismay in the greater Groton community. Ultimately the base is removed from the list of possible closures and remains open.

2012-16 The base receives more than $12 million in state bonding grants to enhance infrastructure.

TODAY The base is the last Navy operation base in New England. It is the homeport of 15 attack submarines, and more than 6,500 active duty and reserve sailors, 2,300 civilian employees and contractors, and their families. It is one of the largest employers in the region and an enduring source of local pride in Groton and the surrounding area, which is known as "The Submarine Capital of the World."

Source: Naval Submarine Base New London

NAUTILUS

THE FATHER OF THE NUCLEAR NAVY

Born in 1900 in Polish Russia, Rickover moved to the U.S. when he was 4, his Jewish family fleeing the region to escape persecution. Rickover would go on to have an illustrious Navy career. His motto was "The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war." He valued performance over rank, once in World War II placing a Navy lieutenant under the command of an enlisted man for a particular task. He often appeared in public functions in civilian clothes instead of his uniform, to the horror of other Navy officers.

In addition to being gruff and eccentric, he was also a visionary. An engineer by trade, he saw the potential of nuclear-powered ships long before many others in the Navy did and over the objections of some of his superiors managed to commission the building of the *Nautilus*.

Though Rickover could be demanding, he was loyal to his men and trusted those he believed in, empowering subordinates with great authority. He earned deep respect from those who served under him, including former President Jimmy Carter.

"He looked into your soul and brought out the best in imperfect people," says Dave Oliver, a retired Navy rear admiral who served under Rickover on the *Nautilus*, and who is the author of *Against the Tide: Rickover's Leadership Principles and the Rise of the Nuclear Navy*. Oliver adds that Rickover was successful because of his laser focus on two things: reliability and safety.

During the construction of the *Nautilus*, Rickover insisted that the reactor be made with such heavy shielding that the ship's crew would be exposed to no more radiation than crews on a conventional submarine. He once shamed an engineer on the *Nautilus* team who suggested a cheap-but-less-safe design option by asking him if he would suggest the same design if his son was serving on the ship.

After his disastrous meeting with Rickover, Anderson returned to Connecticut and told his wife what had happened. She urged him to write a letter to Rickover containing descriptions of all the books he had read in the past two years. Anderson followed his wife's advice and mailed Rickover a letter. Shortly after that letter was sent, Rickover hired Anderson and he ultimately became commander of the *Nautilus* in June 1957.

Anderson recalls that although he and Rickover had vastly different leadership styles, they shared one important belief: "Nothing was more important than the well-being of the men and women who wore a U.S. Navy uniform. Nothing."

ESCAPE FROM THE ICE

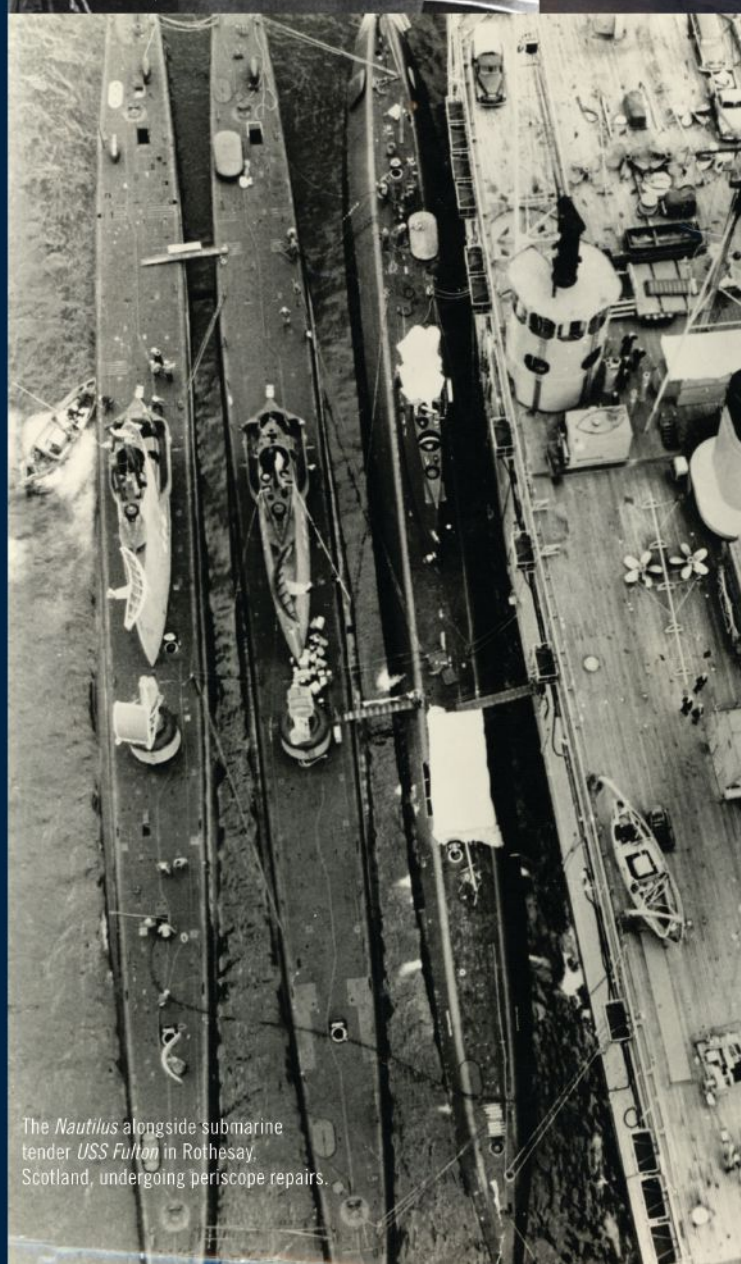
The safety of his crew was Anderson's first concern as the ship crashed into the ice pack in 1957. "For the first time in my career, I was beginning to have doubts about myself and my ability to take this amazing vessel where she needed to go," he wrote.

He ordered the crew to check for damage, and although the vessel's two periscopes had been broken by the impact, there was no major structural damage. Anderson kept his worries hidden from his crew.

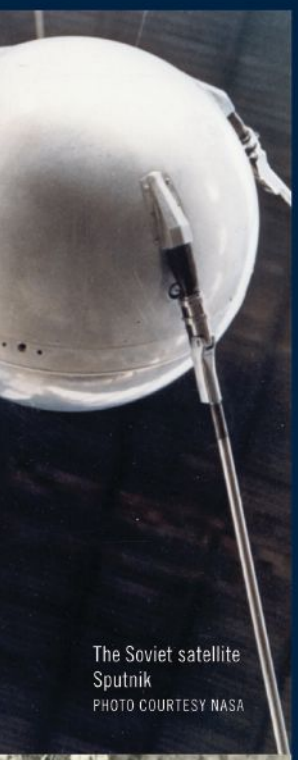
"He was as cool and calm and collected as could be," Yuill says. "He endeared himself to the crew. When you see your leader there cool and calm, you feel calm as well."

After emerging from the ice, the *Nautilus* crew had to fix

Admiral Hyman Rickover inspecting the *Nautilus*, circa 1954.



The *Nautilus* alongside submarine tender *USS Fulton* in Rothesay, Scotland, undergoing periscope repairs.



The Soviet satellite Sputnik
PHOTO COURTESY NASA

the main periscope so the ship could arrive ready to participate in a major NATO exercise scheduled for that September in the North Atlantic off England. Anderson recounted that crew members literally risked their lives to repair the periscope, going to the top of the surfaced submarine and enduring the biting wind and slippery conditions brought on by an Arctic gale. "That was the most amazing repair job at sea that I had ever observed," Anderson wrote.

With the periscope repaired, Anderson and the *Nautilus* ventured back under the ice for a second, more cautious scouting trip. After this less-eventful Arctic ice expedition, the ship headed south to participate in the NATO exercise. During this exercise, *Nautilus* built on its reputation as a one-ship, attack-and-defense fleet. According to naval analyst-historian Norman Friedman, *Nautilus* "presented a greater threat than all 21 snorkel submarines combined," launching 16 successful attacks against various naval formations and cruising 3,384 nautical miles, with an average speed of 14.4 knots in the process.

Anderson was pleased with the ship's performance in the NATO exercise but worried that he had blown his shot at a North Pole transit.

His ambitions got an unexpected boost in October 1957 when the Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik 1 into orbit. This technological triumph was followed by the United States' failed attempt to launch a Vanguard rocket; it blew up spectacularly after rising a mere 4 feet into the air. This was a major PR disaster for national prestige and led to the perception that the U.S. was falling behind the Soviet Union technologically.

With his space program temporarily landlocked, Eisenhower and his advisers began to look elsewhere for a dramatic example of the nation's scientific might. This went beyond mere bragging rights, says Oliver. "Right now it's hard to believe, but at the time the rest of the world was looking around and they weren't sure whether capitalism or communism was the answer," he says.

To help convince the world the U.S. was not lagging, that capitalism and democracy were indeed the wave of the future, Eisenhower turned to a Connecticut submarine and its crew. The president ordered the mission Anderson had long dreamed of: ocean to ocean via the North Pole.

PREPARING FOR OPERATION SUNSHINE

Anderson determined the most difficult part of the journey would be in the Chukchi Sea off the coast of Alaska, where shallow waters and thick ice formations would make for a tight sandwich of space in which to operate. To maximize the chances of getting through this wedge, it was decided the journey would be conducted in the summer, when the ice would be thinner. They would also start on the Pacific side in order to navigate through the most difficult part of the mission in the beginning of the voyage.

There were also the navigational problems that had to be solved. In order to keep a proper course and not unknowingly go in circles or come out from under the ice at the wrong part of the globe, the ship used more conventional navigation systems in combination with its cutting-edge inertial navigation system. Originally designed for rockets, the system measures the ship's movements and velocity, determining locations based on where the ship had been without the need for external references. (Preston, of the Submarine Force Museum, explains this system by likening it to shutting off a light in a room: if you walk 2 feet forward and 3 feet to the left, you can remember how to get back to the light switch in the dark because you've measured the distances you've traveled away from it and can calculate your position in the room based on that.)

Then there were the concerns about safety. Under the ice, any thought of a rescue mission was impossible; the ship would be as out of reach of help as the astronauts who later went to the moon. In an emergency, there was speculation that the vessel could possibly surface by blasting or pushing its way through the ice, but both methods were untested. With rapid surfacing not a surefire option, Anderson wanted to make sure he had a backup source of oxygen in the event of a fire — a submariner's worst fear, because it so quickly eats up oxygen. The crew devised an oxygen tube system that ran through the ship and into which crew members could plug oxygen masks in the event of an emergency. A similar setup inspired by the system on the *Nautilus* is in use on all U.S. submarines today.

Anderson named the mission Operation Sunshine, not out of irony, because the ship would be hidden from the sun, but because the *Nautilus* crew had

Crewmembers scan the horizon to find an opening in the dense ice pack in the Bering Sea in June 1958. **At right:** The crew enjoys Hawaiian hospitality as the submarine arrived at Pearl Harbor on June 28 to await improving ice conditions.

a saying that the "sun always shines on the *Nautilus*." The mission was top secret because if it was a failure the government didn't want another public embarrassment on its hands.

Before the ship set out on its daring mission, Anderson went on one final scouting expedition to Alaska. This was the trip on which he used the assumed name of Charles A. Henderson. As he and Dr. Lyon flew over the frozen Arctic, they agreed that "conditions were not necessarily ideal, but it was probably worth trying the cruise."

'NAUTILUS 90 NORTH'

Before the ship departed, the crew was not told their destination. However, Anderson informed each crew member they could leave the ship before the voyage without any questions asked. Yuill remembers that this unusual option tipped off some of the older crew members as to their destination.

Yuill wasn't worried about the danger. "When you're 18, 19 years old you don't think too much about anything, everything is a big adventure, and it never entered my mind that there was anything dangerous about it."

In June 1958, the ship entered the ice, but it was thicker than anticipated and portions of it jutted beneath the surface farther than expected. The maneuvering of the ship was excruciatingly tight. At one point the ship's crew estimated they avoided another, potentially disastrous, ice collision by as little as 8 feet. Once again Anderson was forced to retreat from under the ice without having met his objective.

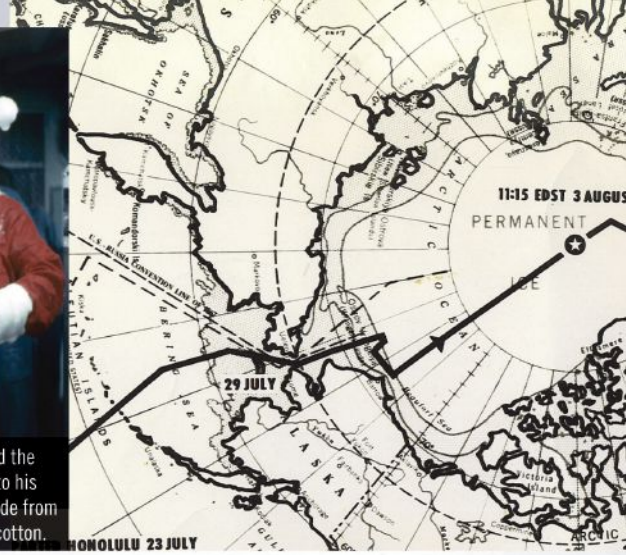
The ship returned to Pearl Harbor and all evidence of the mission, including navigational charts and cold-weather clothing, was hidden away. A cover story about what the ship had been doing was invented and Anderson even wrote up fake logs.

In late July, the ship made its third attempt. This time they successfully navigated through the ice and shallow waters on into deeper waters closer to their ultimate destination.

On Aug. 23, as the crew of the *Nautilus* approached the North Pole, Anderson took the ship's microphone. "All hands, this is the captain," he said. "We are about to achieve a goal long sought by men who have sailed the seas — the attainment by ship of the geographic North Pole." He requested a moment of silence, asked the crew to think of the explorers who had preceded them "whether to victory or failure" and then led the ship in a countdown as they crossed under the pole. "Sunday, 3 August 1958; 2315 Eastern Daylight Saving Time. For the U.S. and the U.S. Navy: the North Pole," he said as the *Nautilus* became the first vessel in history to sail there. At the pole, it is Latitude 90, Longitude 0, or any degree you choose, as all lines of longitude converge there and all directions lead south.

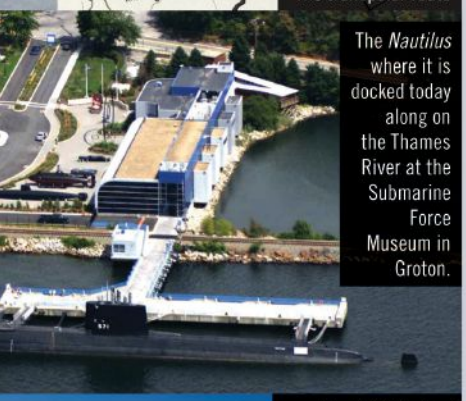
Cheers rang up and down the ship as it passed under the pole and continued on its transit to the Atlantic Ocean. One crew member, Bill McNally, even dressed as Santa Claus. "[It was] the culmination of one of the most thrilling and fantastic adventures upon which any sailor had ever embarked," Anderson reflected. "I think I know how the crew of Christopher Columbus' ships felt — and those who sailed with Magellan and Captain Cook."

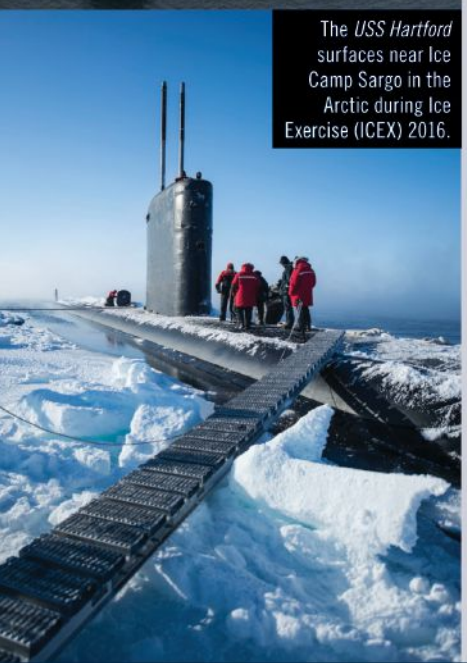
Even Santa Claus came aboard the *Nautilus* to welcome the crew to his home. His special suit was made from red flag bunting and medical cotton.



Above: Two days after crossing the North Pole, a helicopter picked up Captain Anderson off the coast of Iceland for a trip to Washington to report to President Eisenhower. **Below:** Huge crowds, estimated at a quarter-million people, shower the *Nautilus* crew with a ticker-tape parade through Manhattan's Canyon of Heroes.

The transpolar route


The *Nautilus* where it is docked today along on the Thames River at the Submarine Force Museum in Groton.


The *USS Hartford* surfaces near Ice Camp Sargo in the Arctic during Ice Exercise (ICEX) 2016.

On Aug. 5 the *Nautilus* surfaced in the Atlantic. They made contact with a Navy radio operator in Japan and Anderson delivered an encoded message that said merely "*Nautilus* 90 North," signaling the Pentagon the mission was successful. It was the submarine signal heard round the world.

HERO'S WELCOME

Once it was clear the mission was complete, the White House announced it. The story of the crew's harrowing voyage captured the imaginations of millions of people and showed that American ingenuity was capable of doing more than making rockets that blew up on the launchpad.

A helicopter flew Anderson to Washington to meet with dignitaries while the ship went on to England. Then, after being reunited with its captain, it sailed to New York City for a parade. There was also a photo op with the submarine framed against the backdrop of the New York City skyline. After that the *Nautilus* sailed home to Groton.

Crew members and their families were tracked down for interviews by local and national media outlets. The mission was covered in the Sept. 1 *Life* magazine of that year with a picture of Anderson adorning the cover.

President Eisenhower awarded Anderson the Legion of Merit and his crew members would receive the first Presidential Unit Citation in peacetime.

"People wanted autographs everywhere we went. We couldn't buy a drink. We were treated like rock stars," Yuill recalls.

But the mission was more than a publicity stunt, says Don Keith, who co-authored *The Ice Diaries* with Anderson. "From a scientific and from a military standpoint it was a turning point in history, literally," he says. It led to a better understanding of one of the last unexplored regions of the world. From a tactical standpoint it paved the way for the U.S. Navy to transfer nuclear submarines from the Atlantic to the Pacific, or vice versa, in complete stealth without having to publicly cross through the Panama Canal. It also left an enduring mark on those who experienced it and the submarine sailors who were to come.

ETERNAL PATROL

Anderson died in 2007. Soon afterward his updated account of Operation Sunshine, *The Ice Diaries*, was released. Many of the other veterans of the *Nautilus* voyage have also passed, or what is known in submarine lingo as going on "eternal patrol."

Today the *Nautilus*, which was decommissioned in 1980, has embarked on its own eternal patrol as the crowning jewel of the Submarine Force Library and Museum. Docked outside the museum, it was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1982 and named the official state ship of Connecticut in 1983. It provides one of the most fascinating historical tours one can embark on anywhere.

A short distance away from the museum on the same waterfront is the Naval Submarine Base, one of the Navy's major submarine ports and home to the Naval Submarine School. In April the *USS Hartford* returned from U.S. Navy Ice Camp Sargo, a temporary station on top of a floating ice sheet in the Arctic, as part of Ice Exercise (ICEX) 2016. Along with the *USS Hampton* from San Diego, the *Hartford* conducted exercises in March, including multiple Arctic transits, a North Pole surfacing and scientific data collection.

When the ship broke through the ice, the crew of the *Hartford* got a view of the region, a vista the crew of *Nautilus* never enjoyed. "It is big sky country; you can see the horizon in every direction," Lt. Commander Michael McClane says. At that time of year the sun never sets, instead it just moves across the sky.

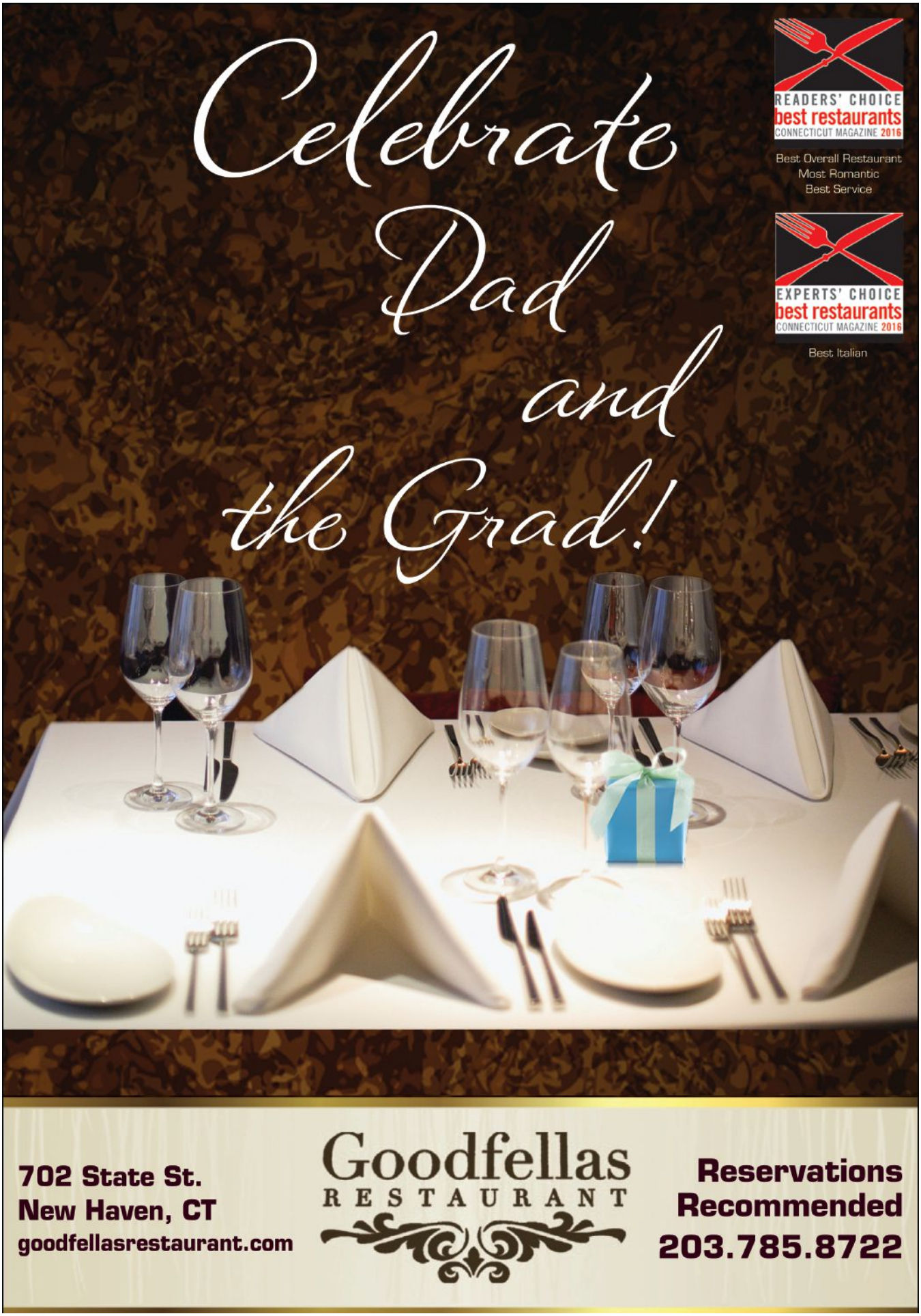
Submarine crews are now more familiar and comfortable navigating under the Arctic ice, and routinely travel that route when moving from one ocean to another. But the region remains remote. During ICEX one crewman on the *Hartford* says he had less communication with his family than he did while serving in Afghanistan.

During their time in the Arctic the crew buried at sea the remains of Lt. Edward Briggs, a veteran of the *USS Skate*. The third nuclear submarine commissioned and also a Connecticut vessel, Skate reached the North Pole shortly after *Nautilus* and was the first ship to surface at the pole.

The crew of the *Hartford* remains impressed by groundwork laid by sailors from the *Nautilus*. "I'm kind of in awe of how they did that in 1958," McClane says.

"They were pioneer explorers," says Thomas B. Aydt, commander of the *Hartford*. He notes they plotted their course without calculators, doing their math the old-fashioned way. "I can't even imagine."

The survivors of Operation Sunshine call themselves PANOPOs, which stands for the Pacific to Atlantic via the North Pole. Yuill says all these years later, his memories of the voyage are almost indescribable. "One hundred and sixteen of us shared an experience that can't be shared by anybody else," he says. "There's been dozens of submarines that have gone north and surfaced at the pole and done all kinds of remarkable things, but to have been the very first is something that stands alone in my mind. It's still amazing to me. It was almost like a dream."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Smoked bacon in a variety of flavors
PHOTOS BY JULIE BIDWELL

Bacon, Beer, Smoke … and Quinoa?

AT CURE IN UNIONVILLE, JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING IS SMOKED — EVEN COCKTAILS

BY ERIK OFGANG

Beet salad

Cure

At first glance, Cure in Unionville is all about the bacon. Various flavored strips of house-cured pork belly are served with flights of beer. Eight hundred pounds of the delicious meat are found at the restaurant at any given time, and bacon even shows up as a prominent ingredient in several rotating desserts. But as important as bacon is, the true heart and soul of this restaurant is something else entirely: smoke.

Prior to opening Cure, Greg Marcuson, the executive chef and owner, along with Mike Geer and Sean Ditson, toyed with the idea of opening a barbecue place. Though he decided against that option with the menu at Cure, which changes four times a year, he has not given up on smoked products.

"I do love smoke and I love the flavors and the aromas that you get from it, so I like to try and lace that into whatever I can," says Marcuson, who served as head chef at Matthew's, the popular restaurant that previously occupied the space now home to Cure.

You can find smoke in dishes like dry-rubbed BBQ shrimp, poutine, chicken salad, bacon and other meats, and chocolate walnut cake. Even cocktails get smoky flavor via the Bartender's Smoke Box, a device the Cure staff came up with that allows the restaurant to smoke the glasses cocktails are served in. The glass holds the essence of smoke, changing the aroma and flavor of the spirits within it.

The unusual flavors imparted by the smoking process, and the playful creativity with which Marcuson employs it, makes for dishes that are always intriguing and often something more.

Cure has a relaxed and comfortable bar area with a non-snobby, hipster design of exposed wood and chalkboard menus, a space completely separate from the more elegant dining room. The conversation-starting nature of the food — as well as the relaxed, warm atmosphere — make Cure a perfect place to visit with friends.

The cocktail glass smoker sits on the bar.

Beyond smoke-infused items, the house burger topped with your choice of bacon — current flavors include honey applewood, pastrami and roasted garlic — is a standout, as is a local cheese plate with selections from Griffon Farmstead in East Granby.

For non-meat eaters the options are also robust. "Even though I'm priding myself in bacon, that doesn't mean I'm ignoring the vegetarian," Marcuson says. Many menu items are marked "V" for vegetarian, including the quinoa & white bean burger, one of the restaurant's most popular dishes. It was sold out the night I visited, but it would be No. 1 on my list on a return trip.

Dishes that deserve praise for creativity, if not the final result, include the duck pastrami and smoked chocolate walnut ice cream. The pastrami is an interesting assortment of sweet duck with spices straight from a Jewish deli that was tasty but didn't leave me craving it again. The ice cream was served over a brownie and made from smoked cocoa powder that infuses the whole dish with a rich bacon flavor that, though better tasting than it sounds, reinforced the reason smoking isn't a traditional part of the ice cream-making process. Better for dessert was the less-adventurous stuffed beignets (crisp pastries with lemon strawberry preserve filling, pistachio sugar and pistachio yogurt), which provided a solid, albeit bacon-free, cap to the meal.

Cure's name is a nod to the cured meats that are one of its specialities, as well as its own slogan "Let food be thy cure," a reference to the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates' famous quote "Let food be thy medicine." Speaking of medicine and health, Cure shares an entrance with Amped Fitness gym, which perhaps makes the restaurant and its promise of smoked bacon and other delicacies unfortunately tempting for those starting new exercise regimens and diets.

After walking through the main entrance, turn left and you'll enter the smoke-flavored world of Cure; turn right and you'll be able to engage in high-intensity workouts at the gym. My advice: "Let food be thy exercise."

One menu highlight is the poutine appetizer. Smoked pistachio gravy, herbs and cheese curds turn this French Canadian delicacy into something addictive. Another standout is the dry-rubbed BBQ shrimp, which, with its husky mix of smoky flavors and seafood base, seemed to prove Cure's unofficial slogan that everything tastes better if you smoke it. (Regrettably, this appetizer came with only two shrimp, leaving my two dining companions in a Darwinian struggle for limited resources — the reviewer always gets first dibs.)

The smoked cocktails include Manhattan's Old Fashioned, made with Elijah Craig bourbon, Carpano Antica vermouth, house orange fig bitters and served in a smoked cocktail glass. Marcuson says the smoking process works best with brown spirits and gives a rich, smoky aroma that also softens the whiskey, making it more palatable for those who don't usually enjoy whiskey or bourbon, and a compelling change of pace for those who do.

Stuffed beignets

Cure

55 Mill St., Unionville
860-321-7821, curerestaurantct.com
Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 11:30 a.m.-1 a.m., Friday 11:30 a.m.-2 a.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-2 a.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-10 p.m.
Price Range: Appetizers $11-$18. Dinner entrees: $18-$32. Sandwiches: $11-$15.
Wheelchair accessible

AMBIANCE One part relaxed bar area, one part upscale dining room; both spaces have their charm. During my visit a jazz group played in the bar and diners of various ages seemed to be enjoying meals in both areas.

SERVICE Our server was friendly and helpful, explained the menu and was patient with a variety of questions.

FOOD Bacon is the marquee attraction here, but the food is about so much more. The smoked creations are creative and tasty, and there's also a surprising number of vegetarian options.

PHOTOS BY CATHERINE AVALONE

Left: George Malkemus and Tony Yurgaitis, co-owners of Arethusa Farm Dairy. **Right:** New Haven residents Luke Harlan, at left, and Brendan Pelsue enjoy some ice cream at a soft opening at Arethusa Farm Dairy's New Haven location in March.

New Dairy Haven

ARETHUSA FARM BRINGS MILKS, CHEESES, SWEETS TO ELM CITY

BY KATE HARTMAN

Litchfield County residents know the delicious joys of Arethusa Farm. For years they've been able to get their hands on artisan milks, cheeses, yogurts and ice creams, which are produced on Arethusa's state-of-the-art farm on South Plains Road in Litchfield and sold just around the corner at the Bantam storefront. The farm prides itself on the quality of its products, and a short commute from cow to consumer has always been an integral part of that quality.

"I do truly believe, in the most humble way, it's the maintenance of our cattle, the feed and nurture of our cows, and the taste of our milk [that makes the difference]," says George Malkemus, co-owner of Arethusa Farm along with Tony Yurgaitis. The partners also own the North and South American license for the luxury shoe brand Manolo Blahnik. "If you begin with good milk, you should have a good product."

The farm's dairy products are available in select stores throughout Connecticut and New York state and used in their fine-dining restaurant, Arethusa al tavolo, also in Bantam. But earlier this year the partners took a big leap — both geographically and with their business model — when they opened their first standalone storefront on Chapel Street in New Haven. For the first time, New Haven County consumers and those stopping through the Elm City could get their hands on the brand's silky ice cream, milks and other items at an Arethusa dairy shop without hopping in the car and traveling to the Northwest Corner.

"We never considered anything outside of our little area because we love what we're doing there," says Malkemus. But when representatives from Yale University Properties approached them, they were intrigued.

"We fell in love with the location. We found it very charming, old fashioned and very Yale," Malkemus explains. "A freestanding store was a big bite to take initially, an investment, a big thing for anyone, any business, but it's been a fantastic blessing."

Arethusa Farm Dairy sits at 1020 Chapel St., the former home of jeweler Peter Indorf and most recently Extra Virgin Oil, which closed its doors in August.

Modeled after the Bantam shop, the new retail space has a clean, black-and-white checkerboard floor, minimalistic accents and images of the farm's animals adorning the walls. Large windows at the front of the long, narrow shop allow passersby to peek inside.

Refrigerated coolers hold assorted cheeses, yogurts and milks — including individually packaged "grab-and-go" milks that are perfect for the student population. Malkemus says they've wanted to sell single-serving milks for a long time, but couldn't justify it economically. It's been a great success in this new venture. They are also making grilled cheeses, which Malkemus says are "selling like crazy."

And of course there's the ice cream and handmade waffle cones. The flavors are clean, simple and feature only the best ingredients. You can always find the standards like vanilla, chocolate and sweet cream with chocolate chips, but seasonal varieties also play a big role.

"We will never have 60 flavors," says Malkemus. "We're just about to start sampling pistachio for the first time. It's hard to develop in the right, natural way. We have new favorite flavors like almond coconut ice cream, which can be expensive because of the almond paste, but we grind the almonds and the pistachios on the farm ourselves."

Malkemus and Yurgaitis are thrilled with the quick success of the New Haven store, but are quick to point out "this is not a business just to be a business."

"There is a trust to preserve Arethusa Farm. These entities are providing a trust to keep the farm going. It's not just two businessmen who are seeing what they can do to make a buck. This is really about preserving farmland," says Malkemus.

Good dairy for a good cause — that's the underlying message here. And now New Haven can get in on the action.

"People who have not known our products now know it," says Malkemus. "There have been lines wrapped around the block. The response has been really amazing."

Arethusa Farm Dairy

1020 Chapel St., New Haven
203-390-5114, arethusafarm.com
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Sun. noon to 5 p.m.
Wheelchair accessible

CONNECTICUT'S BEST BBQ

BY KATE HARTMAN, ERIK OFGANG AND ALBERT YURAVICH

Half-rack of baby back ribs with grilled corn and sliced cornbread at Smokin' With Chris in Southington.

PHOTO BY JEFF KAUFMAN

MEAT MECCAS WORTH A PIT STOP

A loaded tray at Hoodoo Brown Barbeque in Ridgefield
PHOTO BY PAUL ALMIRA

When you think of states with great barbecue (or 'cue), which ones come to mind? Missouri? Texas? The Carolinas? Tennessee? Pick any one of those and you wouldn't be wrong. But really, the best barbecue is that which you can easily drive to. Catering to virtually every style of meat — from pulled pork to pork ribs, from beef ribs to beef brisket, from chicken to sausage — and sauce — from tomato based to vinegar infused, from finger-lickin' sweet to relief-seeking hot, from on the meat to on the side — Connecticut's barbecue joints have it covered. As always, we want to know what you think. What other barbecue joints should we try? Email us at editorial@connecticutmag.com.

HOODOO BROWN BARBEQUE

967 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7), Ridgefield, 203-438-6033, hoodoobrownbbq.com

Named for the notorious leader of the Dodge City Gang in Las Vegas in the late 1800s, the restaurant, which opened last summer to great acclaim, specializes in what it calls "outlaw barbeque," a mixing and matching of various barbecue styles from around the country. The result is a mouthwatering assortment of big, bold and dangerously addictive barbecue that seeks to offer the best of Texas, Kansas City and other regional styles. The cut-with-a-spoon-soft brisket is a must try, as is the beef rib. Other highlights include smoked pork ribs, pulled pork, BBQ nachos, chicken wings, and all the classic barbecue sides one expects. There is a sitdown restaurant and bar that has a rotating lineup of mostly local craft beers, including some hard-to-find gems.

SMOKIN' WITH CHRIS

59 W. Center St., Southington, 860-620-9133, smokinwithchris.com

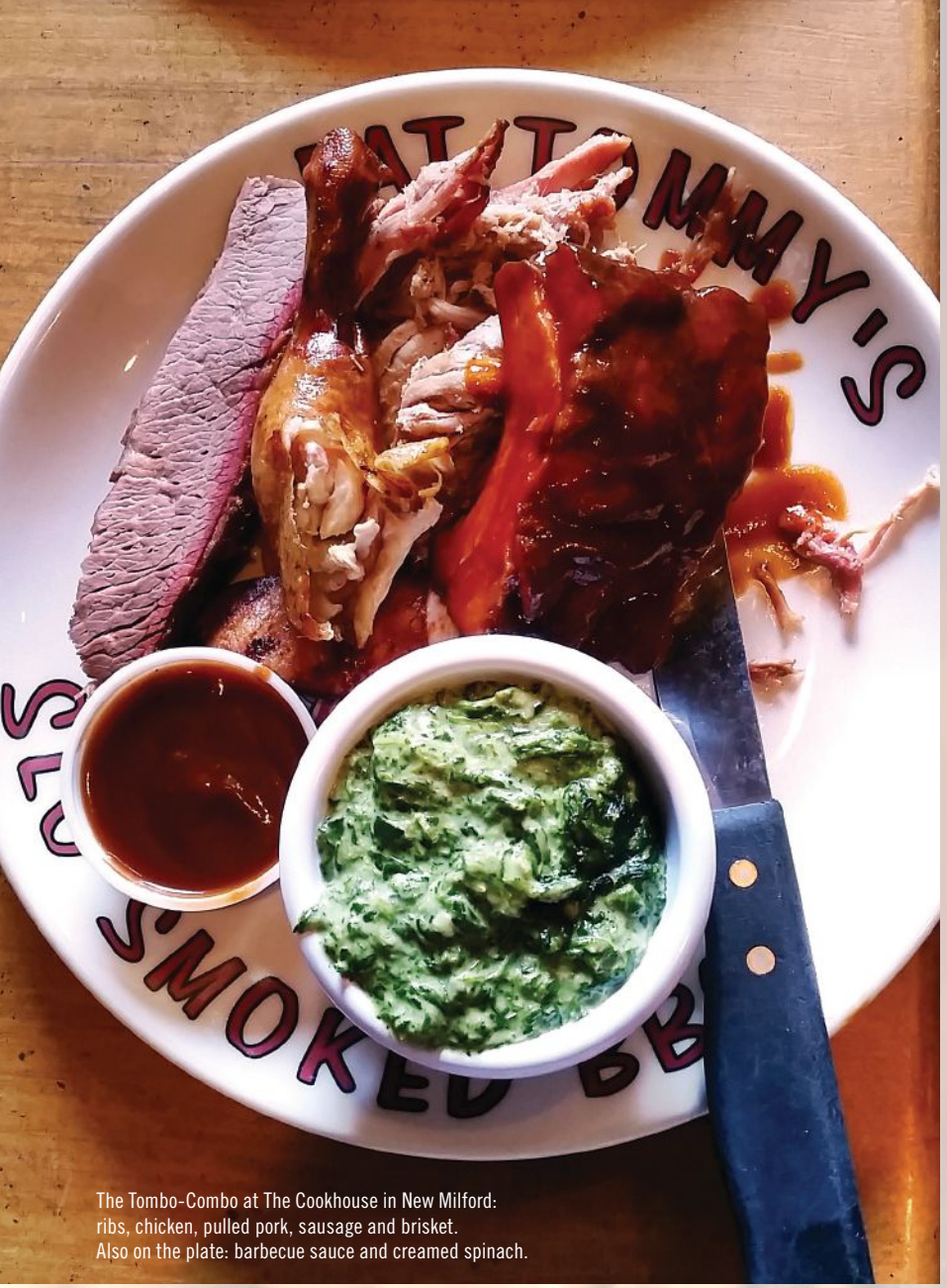
You can smell the delicious barbecue and other smoked-meat offerings before you see or taste them at Smokin' With Chris in Southington. Grab a table on the large back patio in season or in the quaint bar room or dining room, where there's often live music. The owner, Chris Conlon, opened his restaurant in 2004 to bring together his love of good food and good music, and it's been a winning combination.

With a large and diverse menu, there's something for everyone here. On our recent springtime visit, we opted for the meat lover's combo to get a little taste of everything. Enter the shredded brisket, pulled pork and mouthwatering, sloppy ribs. Personalize your meal with three different barbecue sauces — the Memphis southwestern style JR's Sauce, the slightly sweet Kansas City style Chris's Sauce and the traditional vinegar-based Carolina Kicker. All entrees come with two sides including sweet potatoes, cornbread and potato salad.

TAINO SMOKEHOUSE

482 S. Main St., Middletown, 860-358-9828, tainosmokehouse.com

This Middletown barbecue haven is little more than a hole in the wall. Taino Smokehouse has space for only seven tables or 26 people inside, but in season, the restaurant opens its back patio and balloons to seating for 250. It's the brainchild of Chris Szewczyk and his wife Jenny, who opened Taino in 2012 after Chris gave up his



The Tombo-Combo at The Cookhouse in New Milford: ribs, chicken, pulled pork, sausage and brisket. Also on the plate: barbecue sauce and creamed spinach.

Brisket and burnt ends at the Chester's Groton location.

job in the tech industry. This fall they will open a second, larger location in Meriden.

Their pork, beef and chicken products are wood smoked in Taino's large Ole Hickory Pits smoker. The pulled pork and brisket dinners are succulent and kicked up a notch by the restaurant's spicy barbecue sauce. BBQ dinner entrees can be paired with sides like creamy mac and cheese, coleslaw and cornbread. If you prefer your meat on a bun, there are plenty of sandwiches and burgers, plus fried chicken and wings, to fill up on. Or take the meat home by the pound!

THE COOKHOUSE

31 Danbury Road (Route 7), New Milford, 860-355-4111, thecookhouse.com

The aromas wafting around a barn are not always the most pleasing of smells. But the red barn on Route 7 that's home to The Cookhouse defies that reputation. As soon as you walk inside the spacious, two-level restaurant, you know it's a place that specializes in "America's favorite country food," as owner Rob Ryder has called it since opening in 1997.

With recipes collected from family and friends in the Deep South and Texas, The Cookhouse's many options will transport you to those barbecue meccas. For starters, the sweet creamed corn pops are delicious fried nuggets of molten sweet corn, mom's macaroni & cheese packs a wallop with bacon, jalapeños and three cheeses, and the BBQ sundae is a Mason jar full of pulled pork, baked beans, coleslaw, barbecue sauce (no hot fudge!) and a pickle spear. The Cookhouse chili carries a hearty kick, with beef and pork trimmings topped with pepper jack cheese, salsa and lime sour cream.

Pick your favorite meats — brisket, ribs, chicken, pulled pork, andouille sausage and burnt ends — with either a traditional tomato-based sauce or a North Carolina vinegar style. Barbecue dishes come with your choice of two sides, including horseradish mashed potatoes, sweet 'tater fries and creamed spinach. Monday is prime rib night ($18.99 and kids eat free) and on Tuesdays and Thursdays there's all-you-can-eat barbecue for $20.99. A stone's throw from the Housatonic River and a short drive from Candlewood Lake, The Cookhouse is all about family, right down to the plates, which proudly proclaim "Fat Tommy's Slo-Smoked Barbecue," in honor of Ryder's father.

CHESTER'S BARBECUE

10 West Main St., Clinton, 860-669-6868; 943 Poquonnock Road, Groton, 860-449-6868; chestersbbq.com

This beloved local barbecue spot is a great choice for travelers looking to dive into some North Carolina 'cue. The Groton location is a stone's throw from Interstate 95 and the Submarine Force Library & Museum, home of the USS Nautilus. It is an inviting wood space with a self-serve checkout counter and more of

a true restaurant feel than many barbecue spots. The restaurant's slogan, "Barbecue is not the sauce … it's what the sauce goes on" adorns one wall. Fortunately for barbecue aficionados, here the sauce goes on an assortment of tasty slow-cooked meats. We sampled more than our fair share of burnt ends, brisket and pork ribs. Although each was good, our favorite was the highly acclaimed brisket.

A sampling of meats and sides at Bear's.

PHOTO BY WINTER CAPLANSON

BEAR'S SMOKEHOUSE BBQ

89 Arch St., Hartford, 860-724-3100; 2152 Poquonock Ave., Windsor, 860-999-3834; bearsbbq.com

You know a barbecue place is serious when in addition to just napkins, the condiments counter has a sink. Owned by Jamie "The Bear" McDonald, a former competitive eating champ, Bear's has earned serious praise for its Kansas City style. Offerings include slow-smoked ribs, brisket and Bear's specialties like the Mac Attack (delicious mac and cheese topped with pulled pork and barbecue sauce). However, our favorite meat at Bear's is the Kansas City original — burnt ends. These super slow-cooked delicacies are the stuff dreams, or at least cravings, are made of.

Bear's currently has two full locations, plus a recently opened takeout-only spot in South Windsor with a limited menu, but more projects are on the way. McDonald is teaming with Tyler Anderson, chef-owner of Millwright's in Simsbury, for the new bar and restaurant Cook and the Bear in West Hartford, expected to open this summer. The Hartford Bear's is set to move to a bigger location with a full bar around the corner, and McDonald has leased space within Hartford's Union Station that he hopes to have open by the end of June with a different type of barbecue menu.

WALRUS + CARPENTER

2895 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-333-2733, walruscarpenterct.com

Walrus + Carpenter in Bridgeport's trendy Black Rock neighborhood is a perfect combination of rustic, chic gastropub (think scuffed hardwood floors and pressed-tin ceiling) with traditional Southern comfort food (think fried chicken, collard greens and, of course, barbecue).

There are several options from the restaurant's back-lot smoker like maple-bourbon baby back ribs, pit-smoked pork shoulder or jezebel spare ribs. You can also opt for larger meals designed to be split among the table like The Notorious P.I.G., which serves four and includes treasures like maple pork belly, andouille sausage and so much more. You definitely won't be hungry when you're done.

But that's just scratching the surface. A lengthy list of small and large plates aim to please. Sides include baked mac and cheese, creamed kale and asparagus. Start your meal with a few scrumptious snacks for the table like deviled eggs or deep-fried, blue cheese-stuffed olives. And of course there are a wide variety of craft beers on tap, a nice wine list and a full bar.

The Notorious P.I.G. at Walrus + Carpenter in Bridgeport.

PHOTO BY ALEX TORRES

Greer's Chicken Spreads Its Wings

BY MARYELLEN FILLO

For more than a half-century, Greer's Chicken in Bristol has been praised for the thousands of pounds of fresh, secret batter-dipped, rotisserie-fried poultry it serves up to longtime customers.

Greer's, however, has always been something of a hidden gem, located down a quiet side street. Known for catering and takeout, the eat-in crowd is virtually non-existent with no indoor seating and only a couple of tables out front.

But now fried chicken connoisseurs can relish Greer's fine fowl and it's "just like mama makes" mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese and more in the comfort of a restaurant dining room at the new Greer's & Beers in Southington.

"It's something my dad tried a couple of times, but it just didn't work out," says Alexa Zammett, whose father, Rich Plantamuro, has been the longtime owner of the Bristol landmark on Matthews Street. "I was in college in Boston studying to be a pharmacist, but always had it in the back of my mind that someday I wanted to continue the family business," she says. "Midway through college I changed my major to business, transferred to CCSU and decided a restaurant business was what I wanted to do, so why wait?"

Like her dad, who learned the business while working for the Buchanan family, owners of Greer's for many years, Zammett mastered the award-winning chicken as she was growing up by working for her dad.

Located in a former pizza-place spot on Eden Avenue about 10 miles from her father's place, Zammett along with family and friends spruced up the place, giving it a rustic and country-casual feel. A roomy lounge area includes a bar and community tables, while the adjacent dining room is family friendly with a mix of booths and tables. Comfortable and cozy, the only hint it's a poultry place is a few pictures on the walls.

But when it comes to a good restaurant, sometimes it's what you don't see that counts.

"We did upgrade the kitchen and bring in the equipment we needed for the fried chicken," says Zammett. While revealing only that the chickens are cut fresh at the restaurant, that nothing pre-frozen is ever used and that the flour breading is, well, a secret, Zammett says it was important that her the menu lived up to the reputation.

With that in mind, no wonder the mantra is "Why mess with what you know is good?"

Small plates include Greer's famed chicken chunks, and the salad and soup menu features good-for-the-soul Gram's chicken soup and Mexican-inspired honey BBQ chicken salad. Big plates include Greer's famed crispy-never-greasy, half-chicken, Southern-fried dinner.

PHOTOS BY STACEY MCCARTHY

Above: Buffalo chicken chunks with baked beans and mac and cheese. **Left:** Mash and gravy bombs.

But man cannot live by chicken alone, especially if you are eating out.

"It's a restaurant and I wanted to offer more than just chicken," says Zammett. With head chef Nathan Buttons, the menu also includes appetizers like mashed potato and gravy bombs, fried pickle spears, roasted Brussels sprouts and jalapeño poppers. An Italian soffrito with house-made red sauce and traditional green and Caesar salads are also offered. There are build-your-own burgers, veggie and chicken sandwiches with sauce, and topping and bread choices like avocado, fried pickles, jalapeño bacon and pretzel buns.

Big plates also include fried liver and gizzards and mac and cheese. Side plates are the familiar baked beans, potato salad, cornbread and sweet potato fries.

Small plates start at $6, with large plates at $10. There is also a children's menu.

Greer's & Beers also offers a Sunday brunch from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with menu choices including lemon ricotta pancakes, lavender waffles with boneless breast of chicken and honey bourbon maple syrup, peanut butter and banana-stuffed French toast and assorted breakfast sandwiches.

Did we mention happy hour and beyond?

There are several happy hours daily, with bar specials and libations that appeal to every taste, no matter what room you are dining in. Beers include the expected, like Blue Moon, Yuengling and Leinenkugel's Summer Shandy, as well as craft brews like Grey Sail's Flying Jenny, SingleCut's Half-Stack and New England Brewing Co.'s Sea Hag. There is also a varied selection of affordable red, white, blush and sparkling wines. Bartenders, along with Zammett, have put the "creative" in cocktail with house concoctions like "Berry Good Thyming" with muddled raspberries and lemon thyme, and "The Legend" with tequila, muddled orange and black peppercorn simple syrup.

So far so good as far as dad is concerned about Zammett's own career as a restaurateur.

"It feels good to see her succeed and do this," Plantamuro says. "I didn't want to get into a restaurant at my age, but when she said she did, I said go for it. I'm very proud of her."

And as far as having his daughter as a "competitor" when it comes to award-winning chicken?

"I don't mind it at all," he says. "We are far enough away so that we are not competing for the same customers. And if anything, her restaurant has created a lot of buzz and that's good for both of us."

Greer's & Beers

16 Eden Ave., Southington
860-276-1501, greersandbeers.com
Hours: Tue.-Thu. 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Fri.+Sat. 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Sun. 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., closed Monday.
Wheelchair accessible

French Toast Croissant

KING'S RESTAURANT, NEWTOWN

ONE DISH

French toast gets even more French at King's Restaurant in Newtown, thanks to a recurring special called Forget Paris. In this decadent breakfast, house-made croissants are served French toast-style, then topped with fresh fruit, whipped cream and come with a side of rich, berry cream sauce. As anyone who has ever tasted a cronut knows, everything tastes better when you combine it with a croissant in the right way. In some French toast croissant offerings, the croissants end up tasting essentially the same as French toast made with a fluffy bread would. But in this dish the croissants remain unmistakably croissant-tasting and are flaky, light and airy. They combine with the whipped cream and fruit in a manner that tastes almost like a less-dense waffle. The large serving size ensures if you eat this in the morning you won't be hungry until after lunchtime.

King's is a beloved local breakfast and lunch spot that serves up extra helpings of New England charm, and this dish is a great example of the place's appeal. | ERIK OFGANG |

203-426-6881, kingsbl.com

Mojito ZAFRA RUM BAR, NEW HAVEN

ONE DRINK

On a hot summer day there is nothing more satisfying than a mojito. That's my humble opinion, anyway. It's a cool combination of white rum, sugar, lime juice, sparkling water and mint. It's slightly labor intensive, requiring the bartender to muddle together the sugar, lime and mint in the bottom of the glass before the liquids are poured over the top. But the result is a lightly sweet and tangy beverage that doesn't fill you up or weigh you down the way some other cocktails can.

My favorite mojito is crafted behind the bar in this narrow, two-room Cuban restaurant looking out onto Orange Street in New Haven. It may be hard to believe, but Zafra Rum Bar is one of the largest rum bars in America, with more than 300 different varieties. The bartenders here certainly know about rum, and their cocktails are nicely balanced. Their mojito is made with Cruzan Aged Light Rum.

The best thing about the Zafra mojito is that it can be customized with a variety of flavors, including mango, guava, strawberry and black cherry. I prefer the coconut mojito, which adds coconut juice to the classic recipe, resulting in a deliciously frothy tropical drink.

Zafra also serves the mojito eclipse with double-distilled Mount Gay rum, and the Mexican mojito with Karma silver tequila. | KATE HARTMAN |

203-859-5342, zafrarumbar.com

Craft Cruising

BY ERIK OFGANG

NINETY9BOTTLES CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL, June 4 Features New England-based brews, food trucks and live music. It all takes place outdoors, overlooking beautiful Norwalk Harbor. At last year's event participating breweries offered many hard-to-find beers. 2 to 5 p.m. $40. Oyster Shell Park, Norwalk. *ctbeer.com*

CHESTER FAIR WINE & BEER TASTING, June 4 The Chester Fair's annual wine and beer tasting will feature live entertainment and a variety of wine and beer vendors. Local restaurants will sell food. Proceeds benefit the Chester Fair scholarship program. 6:30 to 10 p.m. $20. Chester Fairgrounds, Chester. *860-526-5947, chesterfair.org*

***BUZZED* LAUNCH PARTY, June 4** The launch party for my book, *Buzzed: Beers, Booze, and Coffee Brews,* will be held at Two Roads. I'll be hanging out in the taproom most of the day, and guests get a free beer with a purchase of the book. If you're a reader of this column, make sure to say hi. 1700 Stratford Ave., Stratford. Noon to 3 p.m. *tworoadsbrewing.com*

JONATHAN EDWARDS WINERY SPRING FESTIVAL, June 4-5 The winery's annual spring festival includes live music, food trucks, contests, face painting and other festivities, all at the beautiful vineyard. Admission to the festival includes a wine tasting. Noon to 6 p.m. $25 (day pass). 74 Chester Maine Road, North Stonington. *860-535-0202, jedwardswinery.com*

MIRANDA VINEYARD'S CHOCOLATE & WINE PAIRING, June 10 Guests will be led on a mouthwatering tour filled with handcrafted wines and custom-blended chocolates with the wine pro from the vineyard and the chocolate pro from Fascia's Chocolates in Waterbury. 6 p.m. $35. 42 Ives Road, Goshen. *860-491-9906, mirandavineyard.com*

BLACK HOG CORN HOLE TOURNAMENT/BEACH PARTY, June 12 Ken Tuccio, host of the *Welcome to Connecticut* podcast, is teaming up with Black Hog for a corn hole tournament, pig roast and beach party on the brewery grounds, complete with pools, inflatable toys, beach games and more. Guests are encouraged to bring their bathing suits. 1 to 5 p.m. $70. 115 Hurley Road (Building 9A), Oxford. *blackhogbrewing.com*

FREEDOM BEER FEST, June 18 Celebrate freedom and craft beer at this event, which will feature more than 50 breweries, six food trucks, 20 specialty vendors and live music. The event is a fundraiser for the charitable organization Building Homes for Heroes. 1 to 4:30 p.m. $25 (in advance). Veterans Memorial Park, Shelton. *freedombeerfest.com*

FATHER'S DAY AT SUNSET MEADOW, June 19 Dads who choose to celebrate at this vineyard will receive a complimentary glass of wine with a purchase of another wine. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission. 599 Old Middle St., Goshen. *860-201-4654, sunsetmeadowvineyards.com*

Have an upcoming beer, wine or other craft beverage event? Email eofgang@connecticutmag.com

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In pursuit of culinary excellence Paul (right) juggles many roles. As chef, butcher and friend of local farmers, he is uniquely qualified to source superior local meats that are in line with our Mission. Paul checks out the farm firsthand with John Morosani, owner of Laurel Ridge Farm (just 16 miles away).

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OLHA AFANASIEVA/THINKSTOCK

Fairfield County

Archie Moore's Bar & Restaurant • ***American*** Casual pub-style dining with burgers, nachos and salads. And don't miss the award-winning buffalo chicken wings. • 48 Sanford St., Fairfield, 203-256-9295 *archiemoores.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $

Basso Cafe • ***Mediterranean*** Casual fine dining establishment offering Mediterranean Latin fusion cuisine in a cozy and chic atmosphere. Bar offers a full wine, beer and craft cocktail list. • 124 New Canaan Ave., Norwalk, 203-354-6566 *www.bassobistrocafe.com*. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.), D, $$$

Butcher's Best Country Market • ***Deli*** • **RC** Meats are hand-selected, trimmed and cooked, prepared take-home or in your favorite sandwich to go. Traditional and special salads are also available. • 125 S. Main St., Newtown, 203-364-0013 *butchersbestmarket.com*. Closed Sun. L, $

Crave 52 • ***American*** Dishes like eggplant stack, fish tacos, the Crave 52 Burger, meatball and lobster ravioli are served in an atmosphere that provides a seamless extension from elegant dining into a stylish, attractive bar setting. • 52 Sanford St., Fairfield, 203-292-8080 *crave52.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $$, E, WA

Elm • ***American*** World-class chef Brian Lewis makes culinary magic here — with the freshest local, top-quality ingredients — in an elegant minimalist environment. And there's a great Sunday brunch. • 73 Elm St., New Canaan, 203-920-4994 *elmrestaurant.com*. Closed Mon. D SB, $$$, WA

The Fez • ***Moroccan*** In addition to excellent Moroccan fare—with small plates (kabobs, falafel salad) and large (slow-braised lamb shank, swordfish tagine)—The Fez serves up equally as eclectic live music nightly. • 227 Summer St., Stamford, 203-324-3391 *thefez1.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, $$, E

Fin • ***Japanese*** Specializes in fresh, imaginative sushi and authentic Japanese cuisine. • 1253 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-255-6788; 219 Main St., Stamford, 203-359-6688 *fin-sushi.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 238 Commerce Drive, Fairfield, 203-333-7373; 59 Federal Road, Danbury, 203-790-7373 *pepespizzeria.com*. Open daily. L D, $, WA

Homestead Inn — Thomas Henkelmann • ***French*** • **EP** Upscale French restaurant features impeccable service, comfortable surroundings, an extensive wine list and creative French food. • 420 Field Point Road, Greenwich, 203-869-7500 *homesteadinn.com/thomas-henkelmann*. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, $$$

Ichiro • ***Sushi*** • **EP** Ichiro offers a combination of Asian fusion, sushi and hibachi entrees. Enjoy the full-service bar and the shows put on by the hibachi chef. • 69 Newtown Road, Danbury, 203-792-8881 *ichirodanbury.com*. Open daily. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), $$

Joseph's Steakhouse • ***American*** • **EP** Known for a New York-style steakhouse experience with gems such as prime dry-aged beef. • 360 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-337-9944 *josephssteakhouse.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$$, WA

openings

A monthly look at some of what's new and exciting on the Connecticut dining scene

Nom-Eez, Bridgeport Chef Matt Storch, of Match in Norwalk, opened this Vietnamese street food restaurant in late April. Specializing in pho and ramen, the small restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and also offers doughnuts from Donut Crazy. *203-923-8686, nom-eez.com*

Copper City Bar and Grill, Ansonia Opened by Thomas Carney last summer, this restaurant recently appeared on my radar and I can't wait to try it out. Carney is a veteran of restaurants like the Spotted Horse Tavern in Westport and the Gray Goose Cafe in Southport. Here he is serving high-end tavern food including burgers, pastas and salads. *203-732-2173, coppercitybarandgrill.com*

The Irons Restaurant & Bar, Mystic Located inside the Hilton Mystic, this new restaurant features two dozen beers on tap and a seasonally appropriate menu that tends to focus on seafood, with dishes like New England clam chowder, snappy firecracker shrimp and baked local scrod. *860-572-0731, hiltonmystic.com*

4 Eat & Drink, Farmington Signature cocktails are the specialty at this new bar and restaurant, which also features craft beer and tapas. *The Hartford Courant* praised it for its "speakeasy feel," a description that instantly sold me on the location. *860-255-7674, 4restaurantct.com*

Roberto's Real American Tavern, East Windsor In the spirit of America's melting pot, this bar and restaurant strives to incorporate "every conceivable type of hearty fare that there is, from pizza and tacos to Asian delights, pasta, burgers and so much more." For good measure there's also craft beer and cocktails. *860-370-9888, robertosct.com*

Know of a new Connecticut restaurant? Email Erik Ofgang at eofgang@connecticutmag.com.

CONNECTICUT Magazine's restaurant listings are presented as a service to our readers. Information on specialties, prices, etc., was supplied by the restaurateurs. Space limitations in this guide prevent us from describing every restaurant in the state; omission is not intended to reflect upon the quality of an establishment. The listings include restaurants we know and love, and those recommended to us by our readers. Average entrée prices are based on dinner entrées: $ — inexpensive (under $15); $$ — moderate ($15-$25); $$$ — expensive (over $25). This guide is updated regularly, but it is suggested that prices and hours be verified by phone. B (Breakfast); L (Lunch); D (Dinner); LS (Late Supper); SB (Sunday Brunch); E (Live Entertainment); WA (Wheelchair Access); **EP** = 2016 Experts' Pick award winner; **RC** = 2016 Readers' Choice winner.

dining guide | fairfield county

The Local Kitchen and Bar • ***American*** Craft beer is the name of the game here with more than 30 lines including rare local, national and international gems. There is also a full menu of classic American cuisine. • 68 Washington St., Norwalk, 203-957-3352 (sonolocal.com); 85 Mill Plain Road, Fairfield, 203-955-1919 *fairfieldlocal.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Pho Vietnam • ***Vietnamese*** A family-owned restaurant serving authentic Vietnamese food with fresh produce, choice meats and seafood. • 56 Padanaram Road, Danbury, 203-743-6049 *rivebistro.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Positano Ristorante • ***Italian*** This restaurant has been owned and operated by the Scarpati family for more than 15 years. Owner and chef Giuseppe Scarpati was born on the island of Ponza, Italy, and his cuisine focuses on all-natural cooking, with fresh fishes, meats, fruits, vegetables, and aromatic herbs. • 27 Powers Court, Westport, 203-454-4922 *positanosrestaurantwestport.com*. Closed Mon.-Tues. L D SB, $$, E

Redding Roadhouse • ***American*** This cozy, classic-style pub features seafood and meat classics as well as an assortment of artisan cheeses, a good beer list and specialty cocktails. • 406 Redding Road, Redding, 203-938-3388 *thereddingroadhouse.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $$, E, WA

Roberto's • ***Italian*** • **RC** Excellent Italian food with attentive service, plus catering and a full-service banquet facility. • 505 Main St., Monroe, 203-268-5723 *robertosmonroe.com*. Open daily. L (Sun.), D, $$

Sal e Pepe Contemporary Italian Bistro • ***Northern Italian*** • **RC** Offers superb cuisine with a contemporary flair, from fresh pastas and sauces to unique specials and classics with a modern twist. • 97 South Main St., Newtown, 203-426-0805 *salepeperestaurant.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

The Schoolhouse at Cannondale • ***American*** • **EP** With the motto "Fine. Fresh. Simple," the owners seek out the best sources of ingredients and treat them simply and with respect. • 34 Cannon Road, Wilton, 203-834-9816 *schoolhouseatcannondale.com*. Closed Mon. L (Fri., Sat) D (Wed., Fri., Sat.) SB, $$$

The Sitting Duck Tavern • ***American*** • **RC** Neighborhood tavern committed to using regionally and locally grown produce and products. • 3694 Main St., Stratford, 203-873-0871 *sittingducktavern.com*. Open daily. L D LS SB, $$

The Spinning Wheel • ***American*** • **RC** Enjoy a quintessentially New England-inspired menu with seasonal specials, local and homegrown accents, and modern adaptations of traditional comfort dishes. This classic style pub has 12 types of beer on tap, a rum-inspired drink menu and is housed within a newly renovated historic saltbox style house that dates back to 1742. • 109 Black Rock Tpke., Redding, 203-664-4000 *swredding.com*. Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D, $$$, WA

Tequila Mockingbird • ***Mexican*** • **EP** The food here is made with traditional ingredients when possible, including imported chiles. Tequila is taken seriously as well, with bartenders receiving tequila training in Mexico. • 6 Forest St., New Canaan, 203-966-2222 *tequilamockingbirdnc.com*. Open daily. D, $$

Uberti's Fish Market • ***Seafood*** Specialties include fish-and-chips, stuffed scallops, lobster rolls and deep-fried lobster at this seafood market. • 88 Ferry Blvd., Stratford, 203-377-1429. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Wafu Asian Bistro • ***Asian*** • **EP** Upscale dining with a frequently changing menu that utilizes local ingredients. • 3671 Post Road, Southport, 203-254-2288 *wafuasianbistro.com*. Open daily. L D, $

Walrus + Carpenter • ***Barbecue*** • **EP** Sink your teeth into the barbecue offered at this sleek eatery in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport. The customer favorite is the Notorious P.I.G. • 2895 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-333-2733 *walruscarpenterct.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Basso's Cafe • ***Mediterranean*** This fine dining and now full bar establishment revolves around an intimate and authentic expression of Renato's cultural heritage of Mediterranean and Latin American fusion cuisine. • 124 New Canaan Ave., Norwalk, 203-354-6566 *bassobistrocafe.com*. Closed Mon. L D, $$$, E, WA

Hartford County

Artisanal Burger Company • ***American*** Gourmet burgers are the specialty here, but they are only the beginning of the culinary delights diners will experience. • 1436 Pleasant Valley Road, Manchester, 860-644-0046 *artisanalburgercompany.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

@the Barn • ***American*** This 170-seat, 4,000-square-foot ultra-sleek steakhouse and wine bar features multiple dining areas, steaks, seafood, small plates and a wine list selected by a certified sommelier, as well as a wide array of martinis, specialty cocktails and craft beers. • 17R E. Granby Road, Granby, 860-413-3888 *atthebarngranby.com*. Closed Mon. L D (Tues.-Sun.) , $$, WA

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • ***Spanish Mediterranean*** • **EP** Barcelona's newest location in a popular line of hip, European-style restaurants. • 971 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-218-2100 *barcelonawinebar.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, $$, E, WA

Carbone's Kitchen • ***Italian*** Established in 2012, this casual-dining little brother to Carbone's Ristorante uses fresh and local ingredients to prepare old-school Italian classics. • 6 Wintonbury Mall, Bloomfield, 860-904-2111 *carboneskitchen.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$, WA

Carbone's Ristorante • ***Italian*** • **EP** This old-school, fine-dining Italian restaurant was established in 1938 and has survived as long as it has for a reason. Dishes include lobster risotto, grilled veal chop and eggplant, chicken and veal parmigiano. • 588 Franklin Ave., Hartford, 860-296-9646 *carbonesct.com*. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$$, WA

Cavey's Restaurant • ***Italian / French*** Choose from handmade pasta and house-cured salami in the Northern Italian restaurant upstairs, or soufflé and buttery foie gras in the luxurious French restaurant downstairs. Enjoy a cocktail with some light jazz in a casual lounge while you decide. • 45 E. Center St., Manchester, 860-463-2751 *caveysrestaurant.com*. Closed Mon. D, $$, E, WA

Confetti • ***Italian*** • **EP** Offers Italian-American cuisine with a celebratory vibe. Also caters and operates the Big Red Truck food truck. • 393 Farmington Ave., Plainville, 860-793-8809 *idineconfetti.com*. Closed Mon. & Tues. D (Wed.-Sun.) SB, $$

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, any pie here is worth the wait. • 1148 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-7373; 221 Buckland Hills Drive, Manchester, 860-644-7333 *pepespizzeria.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

GoldBurgers • ***Burgers*** The big (with a capital B) juicy specialties at GoldBurgers are all made with locally sourced beef and include the venue's namesake, the GoldBurger, a monster of a burger made with two patties and crowned by potato chips. • 1096 Main St., Newington, 860-665-0478. Open daily. L D, $, WA

Grants Restaurant, Bar & Patisserie • ***Continental*** A West Hartford institution serving inventive dishes like braised lamb shank, pistachio-crusted Idaho trout and chocolate-caramel opera cake. • 977 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-1930 *billygrant.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$, WA

Max Downtown • ***American*** • **EP** Features global cuisine, chophouse classics, a fine wine list and lighter fare in the tavern. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 185 Asylum St., Hartford, 860-522-2530 *maxrestaurantgroup.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, $$$, WA

Max Fish • ***Seafood*** Lively, upscale fish house serving a daily selection of fresh seafood and great steaks. The Shark Bar is more casual, offering lighter fare and Max classics in an up-tempo environment. • 110 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, 860-652-3474 *maxfishct.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, $$

Max's Oyster Bar • ***Seafood*** • **EP** Modern renditions of classic American seafood in an atmosphere reminiscent of a big-city oyster bar. • 964 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-6299 *maxrestaurantgroup.com/oyster*. Open daily. L, D, LS (Sat.), $$$

ON20 • ***Contemporary French / American*** • **EP** Savor panoramic city views and sophisticated atmosphere along with sumptuous seasonal cuisine. • 400 Columbus Blvd., 20th Floor, Hartford, 860-722-5161 *ontwenty.com*. L (Mon.-Fri.) D (Wed.-Sat.) L D, $$$, E

Plan B Burger Bar • ***Burgers*** • **RC** Gourmet burgers and a wide selection of beers and bourbons. • 120 Hebron Ave. #6, Glastonbury, 860-430-9737 *planbburger.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse • ***Steak*** Billed as "the steak that speaks for itself" the steaks served here are USDA Prime. In addition, the restaurant utilizes locally sourced produce in its recipes. • 2513 Berlin Tpke., Newington, 860-666-2202 *ruthschris.com*. Open daily. L (Sun.) D, $$$, WA

Tisane Euro-Asian Café • ***Asian Fusion*** The diverse menu is complemented by more than 40 specialty martinis and other specialty drinks. Try the Far East nachos, wings trio, Tisane Cobb salad, noodle bowls and espresso steak. • 537 Farmington Ave., Hartford, 860-523-5417 *mytisane.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $, E, WA

Trumbull Kitchen • ***American*** "Global comfort food" is served at communal tables at this sophisticated city brasserie. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 150 Trumbull St., Hartford, 860-493-7417 *maxrestaurantgroup.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, $$, E

Vinted Wine Bar & Kitchen • ***Tapas*** This exciting restaurant in Blue Back Square serves 68 wines by the glass along with an ambitious small-plates menu. • 63 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-206-4648 *vintedwinebar.com*. Open daily. D, $$, WA

Litchfield County

Backstage • ***American*** Enjoy casual American fare prepared from scratch — salads and soups, creative small plates, hand-formed Angus patties on house-baked rolls — and 40 beers on tap. • 84 Main St., Torrington, 860-489-8900 *backstageeatdrinklive.com*. Open daily. L D LS SB, $$, E, WA

Community Table • ***American*** • **EP** Chef Joel Viehland offers a seasonal menu using only ingredients grown, raised or foraged within a 200-mile radius. • 223 Litchfield Tpke., Washington, 860-868-9354 *communitytablect.com*. Closed Tues.-Wed. D SB, $$, WA

The Cookhouse • ***Barbecue*** • **EP** "Slo-smoked" baby-back ribs and pulled pork are the name of the game here. • 31 Danbury Road (Route 7), New Milford, 860-355-4111 *thecookhouse.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Gifford's • ***American*** Enjoy a melting pot of a menu that features the flavors of Thailand, Tuscany, Vietnam, Morocco and France, as well as local farm fare. In winter, guests can enjoy a fireplace; in summer, they can eat outside on an awning-shaded dining terrace. • 9 Maple St., Kent, 860-592-0262 *jpgifford.com*. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, $$$, WA

The Hopkins Inn • ***Austrian/American*** • **EP** A country inn with an Old World atmosphere known for wiener schnitzel, backhendl and fresh-caught trout. • 22 Hopkins Road, Warren, 860-868-7295. Closed Mon. B L (Tues.-Sat.) D, $$$

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John's Café • ***New American*** Popular spot for New American cuisine with a Mediterranean accent: grilled pizzas, ricotta gnocchi and salmon with morels. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 693 Main St. S., Woodbury, 203-263-0188 *johnscafe.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$, WA

Mountainside Café • ***Farm to Table*** Modern rustic cafe offers up a fresh approach to American classics, such as the Country Burger and the Johnny Cash Skillet, in a warm and casual atmosphere. • 251 Route 7 South, Falls Village, 860-824-7876 *mountainside.com/cafe*. Open daily. B L D SB, $, WA

The Painted Pony • ***American*** This cozy spot offers a variety of dishes, from prime rib and steak to pasta and pizza. Live entertainment every Thurs. • 74 Main St. (Route 61), Bethlehem, 203-266-5771 *paintedponyrestaurant.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $, E, WA

The Restaurant at Winvian Farm • ***French*** • **EP** Chef Chris Eddy constantly changes the menu, using simple and seasonal ingredients accented with unusual and fresh findings. • 155 Alain White Road, Morris, 860-567-9600 *winvian.com*. Closed Mon.-Tues. L D, $$$, WA

Scarpelli's • ***American*** Since 1936, Scarpelli's has been offering classic comfort foods like chicken parmigiana, meat loaf, fried chicken and fish-and-chips. • 865 Migeon Ave., Torrington, 860-482-7977 *scarpellisclassiccatering.com*. Open daily. B L D, $$, WA

The Venetian Restaurant • ***Classic Italian*** Enjoy seasonal specials and traditional fare like house-made pasta. • 52 East Main St., Torrington, 860-489-8592 *thevenetianrestaurant.com*. Closed Tues. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$, WA

The White Hart • ***Farm to Table*** • **EP** High-quality cuisine made from an A-list of farm sources served in a rustic, recently remodeled historic country inn dating to 1805. • 15 Under Mountain Road, Salisbury, 860-435-0030 *whitehartinn.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

The White Horse Country Pub • ***American*** • **EP** Serves American pub favorites like burgers, ribs and seafood bake, along with some English ones — shepherd's pie, fish-and-chips and bangers and mash. Outdoor dining in warmer months provides a delightful experience. • 258 New Milford Tpke., Washington, 860-868-1496 *whitehorse-countrypub.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Winvian • ***American*** • **EP** Simplicity and indulgence converge with fresh and spontaneous farm-to-table menus and an ecclectic wine selection. Reservations are required. • 155 Alain White Road, Morris, 860-567-9600 *winvian.com*. Closed Tues. L (Sat.-Sun.), D (Wed.-Mon.), $$$

| Middlesex County |

Alforno • ***Northern Italian*** Known for a great selection of house-made ravioli, including veal osso buco with fresh ricotta ravioli, butternut squash ravioli and wild boar ravioli, as well as tagliatelle Bolognese and arugula chicken. • 1654 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-399-4166 *alforno.net*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Angelico's Lake House • ***American*** Overlooking Lake Pocotopaug, Angelico's features great outside dining and a tiki hut. Try the spinach risotto, roast prime rib, stuffed salmon or lobster ravioli with sautéed shrimp. • 81 North Main St., East Hampton, 860-267-1276 *angelicoslakehouse.com*. Open daily. L D LS SB, $$, E, WA

Baci Grill • ***Modern Italian*** Try house specialties like grilled mango-and-chipotle pork loin, chicken sausage and broccoli rabe pasta, Guinness skirt steak and scallop risotto at this casual, trendy restaurant. • 134 Berlin Road, Cromwell, 860-613-2224 *bacigrill.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $$, E, WA

Chester's Barbecue • ***Barbecue*** Mouthwatering, slow-cooked barbecue is the name of the game here. Choose from BBQ favorites like smoked ribs, chicken, brisket and burnt ends. • 10 West Main St., Clinton, 860-669-6868 *chestersbbq.com*. Open daily. L D, $$

Cuckoo's Nest • ***Mexican*** • **RC** Housed in a 200-year-old barn, Cuckoo's Nest has been serving nachos, fajitas, Cajun shrimp and scallops for more than 35 years. • 1712 Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-399-9060 *cuckoosnest.biz*. Open daily. L D SB, $$, E, WA

Dattllo Fine Italian at Water's Edge Resort and Spa • ***Italian*** Enjoy spectacular ocean views as you indulge in award-winning dishes like Torte di Granchio (lump crab cakes with watermelon radish slaw and caper aioli), Gnocchi Cosentina and Tagliata Toscana. • 1525 Boston Post Road., Westbrook, 860-399-5901 *watersedgeresortandspa.com*. Open daily. B L D SB, $$$, E

Eli Cannon's • ***Beer Bar*** • **EP** The Connecticut innovator of the modern beer bar, Eli Cannon's has been pouring sought-after brews since long before it was a trendy business model. Food favorites here include the famous nachos, chicken wings (there's 20 custom sauces), the classic cannon burger and the blackened chicken wrap. • 695 Main St., Middletown, 860-347-3547 *elicannons.com*. Closed Mon. L (Fri.-Sun.) D LS, $$, WA

Good Elephant at Restaurant L&E • ***Vietnamese*** The elephant in this room is flavor—and lots of it. From five-spice duck to sushi-grade tuna, this restaurant serves the salty, sour, bitter and sweet flavors of Vietnamese cuisine. • 59 Main St., Chester, 860-526-5301 *goodelephantcafe.com*. Open Wed-Sat. D, $$

The Griswold Inn • ***American*** The beloved 1776 "Gris" features classic New England cuisine in the dining room, small plates and 50 wines by the glass in the wine bar, and a lively taproom. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 36 Main St., Essex, 860-767-1776 *griswoldinn.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $$$, E, WA

Iguanas Ranas Taqueria • ***Mexican*** • **EP** Affordable, fresh and authentic Mexican food served fresh and with home-style taste. • 484 Main St., Middletown, 860-346-8630 *iguanasranastaqueriact.com*. Closed Sun. L D, $

La Foresta • ***Italian*** • **RC** This big and beautiful ristorante serves garden-fresh, ingredient-driven fine Northern Italian cuisine. It also has a VIP wine cellar and one of the state's best wine selections. • 163 Route 81, Killingworth, 860-663-1155 *laforestarestaurant.com*. Open daily. D, $$, WA

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • ***Seafood*** This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 86 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, 860-669-0767 *ljfishtale.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Luigi's • ***Italian*** Enjoy classic Italian favorites like seafood cannelloni, chicken leonardo, veal parmigiana, whole clams, prime rib and other dishes. • 1295 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-388-9190 *luigis-restaurant.com*. Closed Mon. (except in July and Aug.). D, $$, WA

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Mondo Restaurant • ***Pizza*** This casual, family-owned restaurant specializes in brick-oven, New York-style thin crust pizza. There is also a beer and wine bar. • 10 Main St., Middletown, 860-343-3300 *mondomiddletown.com*. Open daily L D, $$, WA

Puerto Vallarta • ***Mexican*** • **RC** Authentic, traditional Mexican cuisine is prepared fresh daily – sometimes even at your table – mixing time-honored recipes with innovative culinary techniques. • 200 Main Metro Square, Middletown, 860-852-0080 *puertovallartausa.com*. Open daily. L D, $$

Restaurant L&E/French 75 Bar • ***French*** Upstairs you'll find formal, elegant dining and a seasonal menu, while downstairs offers a more traditional bistro experience. • 59 Main St., Chester, 860-526-5301 *restaurantlande.com*. Open daily. D LS, $$$, WA

New Haven County

121 Restaurant @ OXC • ***American*** Watch the planes take off and land at 121, located at the Waterbury-Oxford Airport. The menu runs from great pizzas and burgers to an eclectic mix of American favorites. • 7 Juliano Drive, Oxford, 203-262-0121 *121restaurantgroup.com/oxc*. Closed Mon. L D, $$, E, WA

Adriana's • ***Italian*** • **EP** Old-fashioned Italian fare, served up in generous portions. • 771 Grand Ave., New Haven, 203-865-6474 *adrianasnewhaven.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), $$, WA

Baja's • ***Mexican*** • **EP** Casual, authentic Mexican food. • 63 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-799-2252. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Ballou's Restaurant & Wine Bar • ***Italian*** A casual and relaxed wine bar. Full menu with fondue and much more. Has an outdoor, dog-friendly patio and gluten-free menu. • 51 Whitefield St., Guilford, 203-453-0319 *ballouswinebar.com*. Open daily. L D, $$

Bin 100 • ***Mediterranean*** Feast on delicious Mediterranean cuisine elegantly served in a spacious dining room. • 100 Lansdale Ave., Milford, 203-882-1400 *bin100restaurant.com*. Open daily. D SB, $$, E, WA

Ceviche • ***Latin Fusion*** • **EP** Several styles of ceviche are offered here. In addition, the place features a variety of sizzling Latin dishes, cocktails and 30 types of tapas. Try the Granada Mojito, which features pomegranate flavors. • 530 Middlebury Road, Middlebury, 203-527-7634 *cevichelatinkitchen.com*. Closed Mon. L (Wed.-Thurs.) D LS, $$, WA

Chip's Family Restaurant • ***American*** • **RC** Famous for its perfect pancakes, Chip's also has a creative lunch and dinner menu, and guests are welcome to BYOB. • 321 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-795-5065 *chipsrestaurants.com*. Open daily. B L D, $

Consiglio's Restaurant • ***Classic Italian*** Family-owned and -run for more than 70 years, Consiglio's is known for classic home-style favorites like homemade cavatelli and braciole, eggplant rollatini and lasagna. • 165 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-4489 *consiglios.com*. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri., Sun.) D, $$

Dino's Seafood • ***Seafood*** This family-run favorite of local North Haven diners for more than four decades prides itself on serving high-quality seafood with the taste of love and joy in every order. Customer favorites include strip clams, fritters, lobster rolls, and top-split hot dogs accompanied with a local craft beer. • 540 Washington Ave., North Haven, 203-239-5548 *dinosseafood.com*. Closed Mon. L D, $, WA

Elm City Social • ***American*** • **EP** Features creative and upscale pub-friendly fare in a visually impressive setting. There is also an assortment of excellent cocktails offered. • 286 College St., New Haven, 475-441-7436 *elmcitysocial.com*. Open daily. L D, LS, $$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 157 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-5762 *pepespizzeria.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

Geronimo Tequila Bar & Southwest Grill • ***Southwestern Fusion*** • **EP** Mix of traditional Native American, Mexican, Spanish and Anglo-American fare, with bold flavors and authentic ingredients. • 271 Crown St., New Haven, 203-777-7700 *geronimobarandgrill.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, $$

Heirloom • ***Modern Continental*** • **EP** Chef Carey Savona serves dishes like crab cakes with fennel and vermouth butter and herbed gnocchi with rapini and tomatoes. • The Study at Yale, 1157 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-503-3919 *studyhotels.com*. Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, $$, WA

Home • ***American*** Whether in the main "dining room" or the "living room" lounge, Home offers up locally sourced food and a wide selection of regional craft brews to make its guests feel comfortable and comforted. • 1114 Main St., Branford, 203-483-5896 *www.homerestaurantct.com*. Closed Mon. L D, $$, E

L'Orcio • ***Contemporary Italian*** • **EP** This upscale contemporary restaurant features an outdoor patio and a menu of house-made pastas, grilled whole fish and steaks with seasonal cuisine. • 806 State St., New Haven, 203-777-6670 *lorcio.com*. Closed Mon. L (Fri.) D, $$

Mamoun's • ***Middle Eastern*** • **RC** Authentic Middle Eastern cuisine, made from scratch using fresh, natural ingredients, fine imported spices and signature recipes, served in a traditional environment. • 85 Howe St., New Haven, 203-562-8444 *mamouns.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

Park Central Tavern • ***American*** The dynamic weekly menu showcases signature entrées and classic favorites made with fresh New England ingredients. • 1640 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-287-8887 *parkcentraltavern.com*. Open daily. L D, $, WA

Ristorante Luce • ***Classic Italian*** Enjoy the double-cut veal chops, pane cotto, risotto pescatore and daily fish specials. Extensive wine list. • 2987 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-407-8000 *ristoranteluce.net*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $$

Roia • ***French/Italian*** This new spot in the Taft Hotel building evokes a golden era when romance reigned. On the menu: artichoke soup, chicken al mattone and panna cotta. • 261 College St., New Haven, 203-200-7045 *roiarestaurant.com*. Open Wed-Sun. D, $$, WA

Sans Souci • ***American*** A casual mainstay in the area that prides itself on offering fresh pasta, steak, chicken, veal, seafood and other crowd pleasers. • 2003 N. Broad St., Meriden, 203-639-1777 *sanssoucirestaurant.com*. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, $$

Señor Pancho's • ***Mexican*** Festive spot serving up terrific fresh salsa and margaritas to go with mole poblano, steak ranchero and fajitas. • 280 Cheshire Road, Prospect, 203-758-7788; 385 Main St. S., Southbury, 203-262-6988 *senorpanchos.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $, E, WA

Shell & Bones Oyster Bar & Grill • ***Seafood*** • **EP** This waterside restaurant features the celebrated creations of executive chef Arturo Franco-Camacho whose specialties include steak and seafood. • 100 South Water St., New Haven, 203-787-3466 *shellandbones.com*. Open daily. D L (Sat.-Sun.), $$$

Solun Tapas Bar & Restaurant • ***Spanish*** Solun is Spanish for "the sun and the moon" and this restaurant promises an escape from the ordinary with a wide array of tapas and other food classics from Spain. • 245 Amity Road, Woodbridge, 203-298-9741 *soluntapasbar.com*. Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D (Tues.-Sat.) SB, $$, E, WA

Zafra Cuban Restaurant & Rum Bar • ***Cuban*** With a collection of 300 different kinds of rum — one of the largest in the country — this New Haven establishment is Connecticut's first true rum bar. Small, dark and atmospheric, this hip locale features chef Tadahiro ("Haya") Hayasaka's subtle and sometimes fanciful take on Cuban soul food. • 259 Orange St., New Haven, 203-859-5342 *zafrarumbar.com*. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri.) D LS, $$, WA

New London County

Alta Strada • ***Italian*** Try favorites like chittara with spicy lobster and fresh peas and grilled lamb chops with asparagus, potato and pickled onion salad. • MGM Grand at Foxwoods, 240 MGM Grand Drive, Mashantucket, 860-312-2582 *altastradarestaurant.com*. Open daily. L D LS SB, $$$, WA

Ballo Italian Restaurant & Social Club • ***Italian*** A sumptuous restaurant inspired by the magnificent 12th-century Abbey of San Galgano in Siena. On the menu: pizza and pasta, striped bass and veal porterhouse. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-1100 *balloitalian.com*. Open daily. L (Sat.-Sun.) D LS (Fri.-Sat.), $$, WA

Bar Americain • ***American*** This brasserie serves up Bobby Flay specialties like lobster-avocado cocktails, buttermilk-fried chicken with biscuits — and big-time glamour. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8000 *baramericain.com*. Open daily. D, $$

Bleu Squid • ***American*** A bakery and cheese shop serving 30 cheeses and 40 different cupcakes. Also serves up grilled cheese sandwiches to go, freshly made and to order, including the best-selling lobster grilled cheese. • 27 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, 860-536-6343 *dessertsmysticct.com*. Open daily. L, $, WA

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| dining guide | new london county

C.C. O'Brien's • ***Irish Pub*** A neighborhood sports pub with great food, friendly service, sports on 20 HDTVs and live entertainment on Saturday nights. • 8 Mechanic St., Pawcatuck, 860-599-2034 *ccobriens.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

Caffé NV • ***Greek*** Favorites include pasta a la Philip and shrimp Saganaki at this restaurant with stained-glass windows and brick walls. • 57 Boston Post Road, Waterford, 860-444-8111 *cafenv.com*. Closed Sun. L D LS, $$, WA

The Captain Daniel Packer Inne • ***American*** This 1754 whaler's inn features a view of the Mystic River along with dishes like lemon pepper chicken, filet mignon and salmon • 32 Water St., Mystic, 860-536-3555 *danielpacker.com*. Open daily. L D, $$$, WA

Chaplin's & Friends Bistro • ***Seafood*** Specializes in locally caught seafood and regional American bistro favorites. Standouts include halibut sautéed with almonds, tuna with fresh mango and roasted red-pepper sauce and swordfish garnished with salsa. • 165 Bank St., New London, 860-990-5263 *chaplinsandfriends.com*. Open daily. L D, $$$, WA

Chester's Barbecue • ***Barbecue*** • **EP RC** Mouthwatering, slow-cooked barbecue is the name of the game here. Choose from BBQ favorites like smoked ribs, chicken, brisket and burnt ends. • 943 Poquonnock Road, Groton, 860-449-6868 *chestersbbq.com*. Open daily. L D, $$

The Chestnut Grille • ***American*** The winning seasonal menu here includes succulent treats such as pan-roasted duck breast and seared diver scallops. • The Bee and Thistle Inn, 100 Lyme St., Old Lyme, 860-434-1667 *beeandthistleinn.com*. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, $$$, E

Flanders Fish Market & Restaurant • ***Seafood*** Flanders excels at lobster bisque, fish-and-chips and broiled seafood. Known for its bountiful Sunday buffet, fresh seafood market and New England clambakes. • 22 Chesterfield Road, East Lyme, 860-739-8866 *flandersfish.com*. Open daily. L D SB, $$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • ***Pizza*** While world-famous clam pizza is the standout, many others are also worth the wait. This expanding pizza empire continues to set the standard for Connecticut pies. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8888 *pepespizzeria.com*. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, $, WA

Inishmor Pub • ***Irish American*** Get a taste of the old country at this authentic Irish pub where specialties include Gaelic favorites like chips and curry and shepherd's pie. • 20 Main St., Colchester *inishmorpub.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $$, E

Kensington's at The Spa at Norwich Inn • ***American*** A first-class restaurant serving gourmet food with an emphasis on natural meats, fresh, locally sourced produce and healthy preparations. • 607 West Thames St., Norwich, 860-425-3630 *thespaatnorwichinn.com*. Open daily. B L D SB, $$$, E, WA

Kitchen Little • ***American*** Enjoy a panoramic view of the Mystic River while dining on eggs Benedict, omelets and other savory egg dishes at this breakfast destination. • 36 Quarry Road, Mystic, 860-536-2122. Open daily for breakfast. B L (Mon.-Fri.) SB, $

Octagon • ***American*** The menu at this upscale yet relaxed steakhouse includes the signature 24-ounce, bone-in rib eye, 14-ounce Kobe sirloin and wild striped bass. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • Mystic Marriott Hotel, 625 North Road, Groton, 860-326-0360 *octagonsteakhouse.com*. Open daily. B L D, $$$, R

The Old Lyme Inn • ***American*** • **EP** The Inn's restaurant and bar features a locally sourced menu with a modern twist on traditional dishes. • 85 Lyme St., Old Lyme, 860-434-2600 *oldlymeinn.com*. Open daily. L D, $$$, WA

| Tolland County |

Altnaveigh Inn & Restaurant • ***American*** This 1734 farmhouse serves filet mignon with port-wine reduction demiglace and pan-seared tuna with onion marmalade. • 957 Storrs Road, Storrs, 860-429-4490 *altnaveighinn.com*. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, $$$, WA

Bidwell Tavern • ***American*** • **EP** This 1822 Coventry tavern, once the town hall, offers prime rib, chicken wings and 24 beers on tap. • 1260 Main St. (Route 31), Coventry, 860-742-6978. Open daily. L D LS, $$, E, WA

The Blue Oak at the Nathan Hale Inn • ***American*** On the UConn campus, enjoy honest New England-style dishes and

lighter fare. Great wine selection. • 855 Bolton Road, Storrs, 860-427-7888 *nathanhaleinn.com*. Open daily. B L D, $$

Georgina's Italian Restaurant • ***Italian*** Warm and inviting — try the calamari appetizer, chicken Athena, lasagna and chicken parmigiano. • 275 Boston Tpke., Bolton, 860-647-0345 *georginasrestaurant.com*. Closed Mon. L D, $$, WA

Lakeview Family Restaurant • ***Fresh Seafood / Italian*** • EP Fresh seafood, Italian dishes, paninis, salads, burgers and wings are served in a casual, romantic waterside setting. • 50 Lake St., Coventry, 860-498-0500 *coventrylakeview.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, E, WA

Little Mark's Big BBQ • ***Barbecue*** Little Mark's famous homemade sauces, such as Kansas City Sweet, Pork Pickin' Vinegar and Texas Hot, enhance the beef and pork ribs. • 226 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-872-1410 *littlemarksbbq.com*. Open daily. L D, $$, WA

Rein's New York Style Deli-Restaurant • ***American*** • RC Bright and bustling Jewish deli serving everything from challah French toast and potato pancakes to pastrami reubens and cheese blintzes. • 435 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, 860-875-1344 *reinsdeli.com*. Open daily. B L D LS SB, $, WA

Trattoria da Lepri • ***Italian*** This family-owned and -run eatery prepares dishes from scratch with local ingredients. • 89 West Road, Ellington, 860-875-1111 *trattoriadalepri.com*. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, $$, WA

True Blue Tavern at the Nathan Hale Inn • ***American*** Great casual dining in a fun atmosphere celebrating the spirit of UConn athletics. • 855 Bolton Road, Storrs, 860-427-7888 *nathanhaleinn.com*. Open daily. D, $, WA

Willington Pizza House • ***Pizza*** Unusual designer pizza concoctions, including red-potato and seafood casino. • 25 River Road (Route 32), Willington, 860-429-7433 *willingtonpizza.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $, WA

Windham County

85 Main • ***New American*** There's something for everyone at this Main Street fixture: from sushi to duck-liver pâté, pulled-pork barbecue to wild-mushroom ravioli. • 85 Main St., Putnam, 860-928-1660 *85main.com*. Open daily. L D LS, $$, WA

The Courthouse Bar & Grill • ***American*** Serves 20 great appetizers, plus "arresting" main courses such as seafood Alfredo and Montreal sirloin. • 121 Main St., Putnam, 860-963-0074 *courthousebarandgrille.com*. Open daily. L D LS (weekends), $, WA

Hank's Restaurant • ***American*** A family place serving home-style chowders, lobster salad rolls and prime rib. • 416 Providence Road, Brooklyn, 860-774-6071 *hanksrestaurant.com*. Open daily. L D, $$

The Heirloom Food Company • ***Vegan*** • EP Organic cafe & juice bar offering locally sourced, organic ingredients. • 630 N. Main Street, Danielson, 860-779–3373 *eatheirloomfood.com*. Closed Sun.-Mon. B L, $

The Inn at Woodstock Hill • ***American*** The menu at this historic estate includes shrimp-and-sea-scallop stir-fry and duckling à l'orange. • 94 Plaine Hill Road, Woodstock, 860-928-0528 *woodstockhill.com*. Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, $$$, WA

The Mansion at Bald Hill • ***American*** The pan-seared diver scallops with jumbo shrimp is tops, and don't skip the lobster mac 'n' cheese. • 29 Plaine Road, South Woodstock, 860-974-3456 *mansionatbaldhill.com*. Closed Mon. D, $$$, WA

Mozzarella's Grill & Bar • ***American / Italian*** Great family restaurant with a warm, cozy atmosphere serving fresh burgers, steaks, seafood, and Italian specialties. • 460 Hartford Tpke., Dayville, 860-774-3434 *mozzarellasgrill.com*. Closed Fri.-Sun. B L D, $, E, WA

Someplace Special Pizza • ***Italian*** Serves Greek-style pizza, steaks, seafood and pastas at reasonable prices. • 58 Main St., Putnam, 860-928-2884 *someplacespecialrestaurant.com*. Open daily. L D, $, WA

Willimantic Brewing Co. / Main Street Café • ***Brew Pub*** • EP This pioneering brewery is located within a historic U.S. Post Office building. Beers are brewed in full view of diners. Try the ale-steamed mussels. Other Connecticut craft beers available. • 967 Main St., Willimantic, 860-423-6777 *willibrew.com*. Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D, $$, WA

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wnpr

Faith Middleton food schmooze®

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Straight Up: Single Ticket
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Straight Up with a Twist!
Single Ticket
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The Perfect Martini Experience
TWO Tickets
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Includes
2 Early Admission Tickets

2 Stemless Martini Competition glasses

A hotel room at Foxwoods for the night on June 23

Complimentary transportation from the hotel and back

Designated Driver:
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$30

2016 Faith Middleton Food Schmooze® Martini Competition
Thursday, June 23, 2016 6 - 9 p.m.

The Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center
110 Pequot Trail | Mashantucket, CT 06338

Join hundreds of passionate foodies and mixology enthusiasts for the food and cocktail event of the year. Attendees will vote for their favorite drinks, and the winner will be named the Official Martini of the Food Schmooze®!

Visit **ctmartini.org** for more information and to purchase tickets.

Must be 21+ to attend. Please drink responsibly.

MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT MUSEUM & RESEARCH CENTER

What's On!

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC BROADCASTING NETWORK

06.2016

CPTV | WNPR | CPBN.ORG

WHERE WE LIVE

Get to Know Lucy Nalpathanchil
The New Host of WNPR's
Where We Live
Weekdays at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.

wnpr

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We at the Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network (CPBN), home of Connecticut Public Radio (WNPR) and Connecticut Public Television (CPTV), have some exciting news: John Dankosky, a longtime member of the WNPR family, is the new executive editor of the New England News Collaborative, a role he will be taking on from WNPR's Connecticut office.

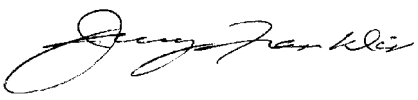
The New England News Collaborative (NENC) includes WNPR and seven other New England public media stations and was formed to explore issues of importance to New England residents. This kind of local-minded reporting is just what listeners have come to expect from John, who, before taking on his new role, served as vice president of news for CPBN/WNPR and host of the WNPR talk show *Where We Live*.

We look forward to hearing the insightful content John will help bring to the NENC. However, we are also thrilled that he will still be a voice on WNPR, and will even launch a new program on WNPR this year! For more information on John's endeavors, see "John Dankosky Transitions to New Role, Brings New Programming to WNPR" in this issue. And please join us in congratulating WNPR's own Lucy Nalpathanchil on being named *Where We Live's* new host! Learn more about Lucy in this issue's feature story.

Speaking of WNPR, the fourth WNPR Health Equity and Access Forum was held earlier this spring and featured Dr. Gail Christopher, vice president for policy and senior advisor at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Dr. Christopher discussed her ideas for creating a healthier America, and we thank her and everyone who was involved in this important discussion, held as part of the WNPR Health Equity and Access Project. This project is made possible through a partnership with the Connecticut Health Foundation, and more information on the project can be found at WNPR.org.

Finally, I would like to thank Eastern Connecticut State University for presenting me with an honorary doctorate and allowing me to deliver the commencement address to the university's Class of 2016 on May 17. It was a privilege to share some of what I've learned over the years with the graduates, and I am grateful for having been part of their special day.

As always, I – and the entire CPBN team – also appreciate the support of you, our members; you make all of this possible.



Jerry Franklin
President and CEO, Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network

cpbn CONNECTICUT PUBLIC BROADCASTING NETWORK
cptv | wnpr

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THE COMPANY

Getting to Know You:
Bobby Martinez

1. What do you do at CPBN?

I am the Digital Media Producer for CPTV Sports. I am responsible for all web work and social media, and I also play a pivotal role in creating content for our site. It's a job that requires a lot of time and effort because of our growing number of followers and viewers.

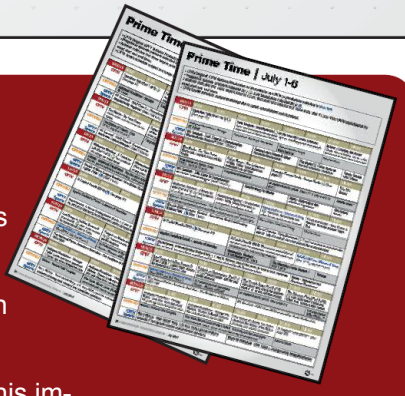
2. What brought you to public media?

Well, my story is unique. Growing up, I had no idea what I wanted to do. Once I graduated high school in 2009, I attended Tunxis Community College, a school that made me look at my life from a different angle.

I was in the library studying for a math test, and I randomly asked myself, 'What do I want to do with my life? What do I love to do?' Then it hit me, sports. How can I base my career around sports? I then transferred to Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) in the fall of 2012 where I chose to major in journalism. I say this all the time, the journalism department at SCSU changed my life. In May 2015, I received my bachelor's degree in journalism and was the first person in my family to graduate college.

3. Do you have a motto you live by?

"Failure is not an option."



CPTV's Television Listings Return!

CPBN would like to thank our members, viewers, and readers of *Connecticut Magazine* for their feedback regarding the decision to remove our television listings from this magazine. We are pleased to learn that these listings have become such an integral part of your television experience.

Because of your feedback, we have made an investment in this important service. Beginning with the July 2016 issue, you will see our monthly schedule back in the magazine. Thank you once again for your patience and understanding.

WHERE WE LIVE

“THIS IS *WHERE WE LIVE*”

In May, listeners began hearing a new voice open the popular WNPR call-in talk show with this familiar introduction. Reporter Lucy Nalpathanchil took the helm of ***Where We Live*** when John Dankosky, (pictured) who has hosted the program for 10 years, began his tenure as Executive Editor of the newly-formed New England News Collaborative. Although listeners have heard Nalpathanchil's reports on WNPR since 2006, serving as a permanent host has presented a new set of opportunities and challenges.

CPBN sat down with Nalpathanchil as she prepared for her first week serving as full-time host to learn about the topics she is eager to explore, how her own experiences have influenced her reporting, and what WWL audiences can expect to hear next.

So first of all, congratulations on your new position! You must be very excited.

I am very excited. I'm honored to take over this role from John – he built a great show. When you look at the public radio system, not many member stations have the ability or the commitment to have locally-produced talk shows, and we have three and we're bringing on a fourth. We're committed to doing that because we know that our listeners value that local service that we're providing.

Can you tell us a little about your background in public radio?

So I've been a public radio reporter for 17 years. I've always known I've wanted to be a journalist. Surprisingly, when people ask "When did you know?" I say, "Well, I was in the sixth grade." When I was growing up, my parents would always have the nightly news on in the evening. And so I remember putting together a little newspaper when I was in sixth grade – we called it *Sixth Avenue*.

When I went to college, I went to Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, and I was thinking that I still wanted to be involved in journalism, maybe television, and I also majored in political science. [While I was there] I was also a news assistant at a public radio station called WDUQ. From there I worked my way up to being a part-time reporter. That gave me a lot of hands-on reporting and hosting experience before I had even graduated.

As the new host of *Where We Live*, what topics are you excited to tackle first?

I'm a child of immigrants; both of my parents are from India. When we talk about race in this country, we typically focus on black and white, but the Latino and Hispanic population has been growing in the state of Connecticut, the Asian population has been growing, and I want to talk more about these other groups not just within our state but within our country. I want to talk about how these demographics are changing as well as the issues that are important to them.

But we still are going to talk about the things that our listeners have come to expect over the past 10 years of *Where We Live*. The unique part of having a talk show like *Where We Live* is that we allow listeners to call in and join the conversation – we're going to keep doing that. We'll still talk about issues in specific communities and broaden the discussion to see what's happening around the country.

Any final thoughts?

I would encourage anyone to pitch shows to us - email me or tweet at us about something that's happening in your community or that you want to know more about. We're open to hearing those comments and suggestions.

Hosts are never experts on a certain topic. Our job is to ask the questions and get that conversation going so people listening can learn about issues they or their neighbors are facing.

Hear Lucy Nalpathanchil on *Where We Live* weekdays at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. on WNPR.

Like *Where We Live* on Facebook, and follow the show on Twitter at @wherewelive.

cptv TV

HIGHLIGHTS

THE GREAT POLAR BEAR FEAST

Wednesday, June 22
at 8 p.m. on CPTV

Investigate the problems facing a unique population of polar bears due to climate change. At the heart is an extraordinary event — the annual gathering of up to 80 polar bears on Barter Island in the Arctic Ocean each September.

Endeavour on *Masterpiece*

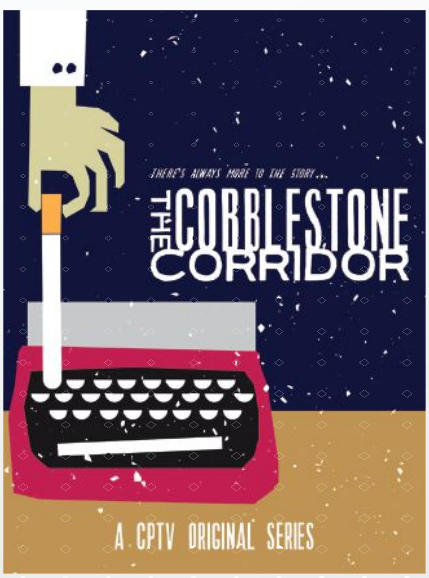
Sundays at 9 p.m. beginning June 19 on CPTV

Shaun Evans returns for a third season as the young Endeavour Morse. In four new films, Endeavour must deal with the aftermath of the events that left him in prison and his senior officer, DI Thursday (Roger Allam), with a life-threatening injury.

Dancing on the Edge

Sundays at 8 p.m. beginning June 26 on CPTV

Follow the story about a black jazz band's experiences in London in the 1930s. Composed of talented musicians, the band achieves success and secures record deals. But tragedy strikes, setting off a chain of events that threatens the band's survival. The series stars Chiwetel Ejiofor, John Goodman, and Jacqueline Bisset.



The Cobblestone Corridor

Monday, June 20 at 10 p.m. on CPTV

CPTV's new original drama series premieres in October, but you can catch the short film on which it's based this month! The film tells the tale of Allan Archer who, as the editor-in-chief of the newspaper club at Alfred Pierce Preparatory School, investigates the suspicious termination of English department chairman Dr. Peter Carroll.

Ode to Joy: Beethoven's Symphony No. 9

Sunday, June 19 at 8 p.m. on CPTV4U

Join the Vienna Chamber Orchestra and Westminster Choir in Princeton and Vienna as they celebrate Civil Rights advocate and philanthropist William H. Scheide with a performance of Beethoven's monumental Symphony No. 9. Actor John Lithgow narrates.

9 Months that Made You

Wednesdays at 10 p.m. beginning June 29 on CPTV

Discover the thrilling story of how you were made, from the moment of conception to the moment of birth 280 days later. Follow the gestation process, the most exquisite biological choreography found in nature.

TV HIGHLIGHTS

GREAT PERFORMANCES

Joan Baez 75th Birthday Celebration

RED CARPET EVENT – TICKETS

CPTV
Saturday, June 4 at 8 p.m.
Monday, June 6 at 8 p.m.
Thursday, June 9 at 11 p.m.

CPTV4U
Sunday, June 5 at 9 p.m.

Celebrate Joan Baez's birthday at New York's historic Beacon Theatre with a performance that honors her legendary 50-plus years in music. Guests include David Bromberg, Jackson Browne, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Judy Collins, David Crosby, Emmylou Harris, Indigo Girls, Damien Rice, Mavis Staples, Nano Stern, Richard Thompson, and Paul Simon.

cptv SPORTS

Catch live coverage of **CIAC Baseball Championships** this month on CPTV Sports!

Carol Burnett's Favorite Sketches

CPTV
Saturday, June 4 at 5 p.m.
Thursday, June 9 at 8 p.m.
CPTV4U
Wednesday, June 8 at 8 p.m.

Join Carol Burnett for her personally selected favorite moments from her long-running comedy series, including sketches from the first five years of the show not seen in decades.

Red Hot Chilli Pipers Live at the Lake

CPTV | Saturday, June 4 at 10 p.m., Sunday, June 5 at 8 p.m., Wednesday, June 8 at 8 p.m.

Enjoy this spectacular performance by the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, a stellar cast of 16 musicians and dancers who infuse traditional Scottish music with rock/pop anthems. For this concert, they crossed the Atlantic to perform by the shores of Lake Michigan at the Milwaukee Irish Fest in 2014.

RED CARPET EVENT WITH TICKETS AND MEET & GREET

The Allergy Solution with Leo Galland, MD

CPTV
Saturday, June 4 at 10:30 a.m.
Sunday, June 5 at 8:30 a.m.
and 11 p.m.

Take an in-depth look at how we can balance immunity through nutrition and lifestyle to reverse allergies without drugs. Award-winning doctor Leo Galland, MD reveals the shocking rise of hidden allergies that lead to unexplained weight gain, anxiety, fatigue, ADHD, depression, and much more.

Mannheim Steamroller 30/40 Live

CPTV | Saturday, June 4 at 6:30 p.m., Sunday, June 5 at 3 p.m.
This exciting special celebrates 30 years of holiday music and 40 years of groundbreaking Fresh Aire compositions. Combining interviews and behind-the-scenes footage with musical performances, the program was recorded over two evenings at the Orpheum Theater in Omaha, Nebraska.

RED CARPET EVENT WITH TICKETS AND MEET & GREET WITH BAND MEMBERS

RADIO

John Dankosky Transitions to New Role, Brings New Programming to WNPR

In May, John Dankosky, the longtime host of WNPR's *Where We Live* (WWL), began his new tenure as the Executive Editor of the New England News Collaborative (NENC). A newly-formed regional news collaborative that includes eight public media stations in New England, including WNPR, the NENC will produce multimedia coverage focusing on the New England region's energy usage, climate, transportation, infrastructure, and its people and immigration issues. The Collaborative is funded by a Regional Journalism grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Although he will no longer serve as host of WWL, Dankosky will continue to appear on WNPR's weekly news roundtable *The Wheelhouse* with Colin McEnroe on WNPR on Wednesdays at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. In addition, Dankosky will launch and host a new radio and podcast program focused on New England issues, scheduled to debut this summer on WNPR.

"I am thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate with some of the most talented journalists in the country, and to build an organization that brings specific reporting focus to the shared issues and interests of our region," said Dankosky. "The states that make up New England region share many challenges and opportunities, and they are undergoing rapid changes. Our vision is to become the most trusted and knowledgeable source for New England reporting."

Under Dankosky's direction, the partnership will produce reporting projects for WNPR and its partner stations, and for national programs including *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, and *Here & Now*.

CPTV HISTORY

On Saturday, June 9, 1990, the popular educational program ***Blitz on Cartooning*** premiered on CPTV. Starring cartoonist Bruce Blitz, audiences learned how to turn simple shapes into finished cartoons and illustrations.

CPTV brought *Blitz on Cartooning* to public television audiences nationwide, producing two seasons of the series as well as a pledge program, ***Blitz on Cartooning From A to Zebra***, in 1995. CPTV received two Regional Emmy nominations in 1996 for the instructional series. After 2000, the show was produced by WEDU under a new title, ***Cartooning with Blitz***.

Tour Italy
with Faith Middleton

This September, tour Italy with WNPR's Faith Middleton, host of the *Faith Middleton Food Schmooze®*, and Carla's Pasta. Travel to Carla Squatrito's home town, and join Faith as she tastes her way through Piemonte, Italy. Destinations will include Winery Braida, Turin, and Genova.

For complete details, including pricing, itineraries, and hotel accommodations, please contact Jennifer Moore at jmoore@cpbn.org.

INFINITY HALL LIVE: HIT REWIND

INFINITY HALL LIVE

IT'S GREAT MUSIC PURE AND SIMPLE

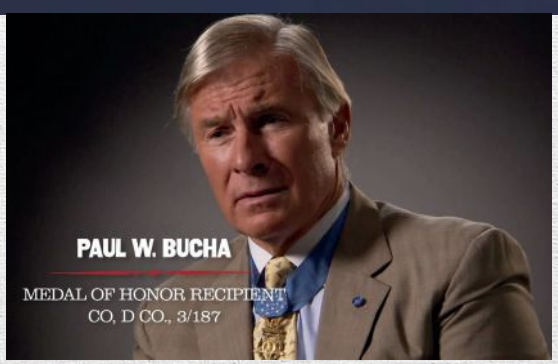
Friday, June 24 at 10 p.m. on CPTV

Catch a special edition of *Infinity Hall Live* featuring songs you remember from artists you love.

Some of the featured artists will be:
Joss Stone, Barenaked Ladies, Toad the Wet Sprocket, Los Lonely Boys, Wilson Phillips, Cowboy Junkies, Rusted Root, Tori Amos, and Joan Osborne.

ihlive.org

President's Luncheon



This month at CPBN, we are delighted to celebrate some of our biggest supporters at our annual President's Luncheon. Our special guest speaker this year is veteran and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Paul Bucha. Paul has been instrumental in the creation of CPBN's Education programs for veterans and is a valued member of our Board of Trustees.

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

If you are interested in joining CPBN's Leadership Circle, contact Karen Tomasko at 860.275.7280 or ktomasko@cpbn.org.

Visit cpbn.org/individual-giving-leadership-circle for more information.

cptvKids

PBS

For the complete CPTV Kids schedule, visit cptv.org/schedule.

June Brings New Episodes of *Odd Squad* to CPTV Kids

Tune in Monday, June 20 for the premiere of *Odd Squad: Agents of Change*, a new one-hour special on CPTV Kids! When Olive and Otto set off to run their own Odd Squad bureau, Ms. O must find two new recruits who can fill their shoes. Also, get to know the newest members of the Squad later in the month when all-new episodes of *Odd Squad* premiere on CPTV Kids.

Also this month, prepare for Father's Day with Dad Appreciation Week on *Arthur* beginning Monday, June 13.

JMA Students Awarded Top Prize at Reel Youth Hartford Film Festival

Ten students from CPBN's Journalism and Media Academy took home the top prize at the Reel Youth Hartford Film Festival this April. The Grand Jury Prize was awarded for the students' short film *The Letter*.

The film was written, shot, and edited by Adrian Sanchez, Cyncere Preston, Mark Doyley, Marilyn Alvarado, Nea Asberry, Neci Moreau, Jewel Miller, Natalia Pagan, Unique Rojas Escobar, and Arlen Rodriguez Salguera.

The Letter was screened in front of undergraduate filmmakers at the Trinity Film Festival in May.

JMA JOURNALISM & MEDIA ACADEMY
MAGNET SCHOOL
Master your message. Design your future.

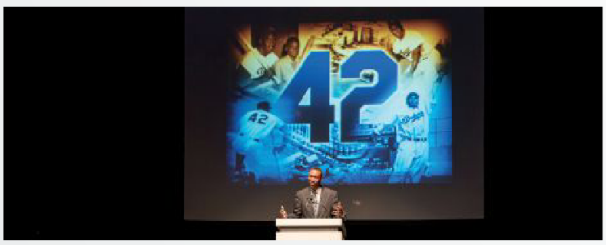
LEARNING LAB

CPBN Hosts Special Tribute to Jackie Robinson

CPBN presented an evening celebrating athlete and civil rights activist Jackie Robinson at The Palace Theatre, Stamford on Friday, April 8. The event included live jazz music by award-winning saxophonist Albert Rivera, commentary and a Q&A session with ESPN commentator and former Major League Baseball player Doug Glanville, as well as a hors d'ouevre and cocktail reception.

Photos by Powerstation Events

The evening also included an advance preview screening of *Jackie Robinson*, a new two-part documentary by acclaimed film director Ken Burns.



wnpr

wnpr.org

Faith Middleton food schmooze®

Join award-winning talk show host **Faith Middleton** on Thursdays at 3 and 9 p.m. and Saturdays at noon for the Faith Middleton Food Schmooze®. She will also be producing podcasts of The Food Schmooze® and you'll hear her five days a week on WNPR in quick one-minute snacks that will run weekdays during drive-time and mid-afternoon.

Live streaming at WNPR.org.

foodschmooze.org

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Faith's Frozen Dark & Stormy

To pick up your party, and to get you jazzed for our Food Schmooze Martini Competition June 23 at The Mashantucket Pequot Museum, you're invited to try our newest summer drink. Our chief cocktail contributor Anthony DeSerio and I teamed up to invent a new version of the classic Dark & Stormy -- using first-class ingredients and serving them frozen. We used the best and most intense ginger beer on the planet, paired it with a dark rum that flaunts its caramel notes, and we cut up a fresh pineapple and froze the chunks. Every ingredient is widely available in liquor stores and markets. (If you're not into alcohol, this one's also delicious without the rum.)

Faith

INGREDIENTS:

1½ ounces dark rum
(Real McCoy or Goslings)

3/4 ounce lime juice, fresh

1/4 cup pineapple chunks, frozen

1 small bottle ginger beer, preferably Fever Tree

1 handful ice cubes

HOW TO MAKE IT:

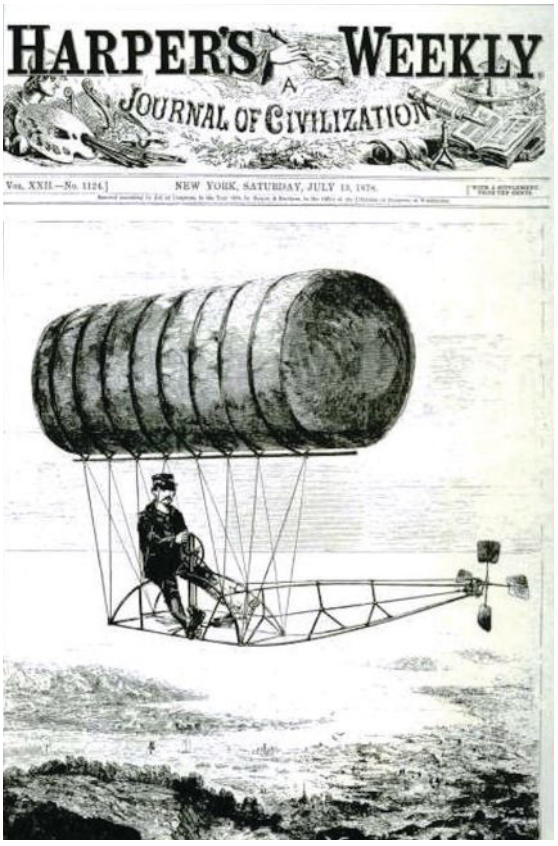
In a blender, mix together the rum, lime juice, frozen pineapple, and ice cubes. Blend until well mixed and smooth. Taste. If you'd like it sweeter, add a teaspoon of lemon or lime sorbet and buzz again, quickly. Pour the contents into a martini or short glass, leaving room on top for a healthy splash of ginger beer. Garnish with a chunk of pineapple or a lime slice. Enjoy!

FEVER-TREE
PREMIUM
GINGER
BEER
Delicious, clean, refreshing and natural. Brewed with natural ginger to enhance the enjoyment of great spirits.
no artificial sweeteners, flavourings, colours or preservatives

BY ERIK OFGANG

Forgotten Flight

DID THE WORLD'S FIRST ROUND-TRIP DIRIGIBLE VOYAGE HAPPEN IN HARTFORD?



PHOTOS: WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

On a relatively calm summer day in Hartford, Charles F. Ritchel set out to conquer the skies.

It was June 12, 1878, 138 years ago this month, at a ballfield behind Colt Armory. Ritchel, with the help of a lightweight pilot named Mark Quinlan and a hand crank-operated dirigible, one of the wildest-looking flying machines ever dreamed up, hoped to accomplish something never before done, complete a dirigible flight beginning and ending at the same spot.

A century earlier, in the 1780s, French aeronauts had begun launching manned hot air balloons. Balloons cannot steer and do not land in the same spot they take off from.

An attempt to steer through the skies led to the development of early airships, also known as dirigibles, in the 1800s. The term dirigible derives from the Latin *dirigere*, meaning to direct or steer. But steering was a hit-or-miss undertaking in early airships; like their balloon predecessors, many sailed through the air at the whim of the wind.

"Nobody had been able to actually turn [a ship] around and come back to where they started," says Richard DeLuca, author of *Post Roads & Iron Horses: Transportation in Connecticut from Colonial Times to the Age of Steam,* who has written about Ritchel.

That return flight was what Ritchel hoped to accomplish in Hartford. His device consisted of a black silk cylindrical bag 12 feet in diameter and 24 feet wide. "Suspended from this by means of cords and rods is a car composed of slender brass rods," *The Hartford Daily Courant* wrote a few days before the flight. The bag was filled with hydrogen, and the car was where the pilot sat. He was able to propel the craft forward by turning a hand crank that spun a propeller. He could steer using foot pedals that allowed him to control a brass rudder at the front of the craft.

Ritchel's device had made successful flights previously in large indoor buildings, but that day in Hartford was the airship's inaugural outdoor flight during which the ship would be exposed to wind.

As Quinlan prepared to board Ritchel's invention, a crowd of spectators gathered at the field, after paying a 15-cent admission fee. They were lured by an advertisement two days earlier in the *Courant* that promised spectators the chance to see "Prof. C. F. Ritchel's FLYING CAR!"

When Quinlan took off he rose "to a height of 200 feet and sailed off until over the Connecticut River," recounted *Harper's Weekly* in its July 13, 1878, issue, the cover of which is shown above.

Harper's reported Quinlan was able to control the craft with ease, "to change its altitude and direction at will." As the wind started to pick up he circled back over the ballfield and landed, having successfully completed what seems to be world's earliest round-trip dirigible flight. However, the significance of the feat has been overlooked by history. The voyage of the French Army airship *La France* 12 years later on Aug. 9, 1884, is generally listed, incorrectly, as the world's first dirigible round-tripper.

"I've never heard of Charles Ritchel or of his flight, however, the fact that it was witnessed by so many people leaves no doubt as to its veracity," says C. Michael Hiam, author of *Dirigible Dreams: The Age of the Airship*. "The history of aviation, and also of space travel, has always been about national prestige, and while Ritchel was a lone inventor, the airship *La France* had the full backing of the French state."

With a bushy goatee, Ritchel had the look and eccentric genius of a mad scientist. He held more than 150 patents, and is best known as the inventor of the funhouse mirror, which continues to be a favorite at carnivals and amusement parks. In the 1890s, when organizers of the Chicago's World Fair were seeking proposals for a centerpiece that would rival the Eiffel Tower, built in Paris in 1889, Ritchel submitted an implausible-sounding idea for a building with three sections, the top two of which would periscope up and down by means of a "complicated system of hydraulic tubes," writes Erik Larson in *The Devil in the White City*. Organizers quickly passed on the concept, building the world's first Ferris wheel instead.

After the successful Hartford flight, Ritchel manufactured and sold five of his flying machines. He envisioned a bigger, long-distance version of the airship based on the same principles. This larger craft would be mechanically powered by an 11-man, hand-cranking crew. It was never built, and despite the ingenuity of many of his inventions, Ritchel died penniless in 1911 at age 66.

In June 1911, Connecticut drafted the nation's first aviation law that standardized aviation rules. This helped set the stage for national aviation laws and the formation of the Federal Aviation Administration that continues to rule our skies — skies Ritchel successfully tamed all those years ago in Hartford, if only for a day.

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